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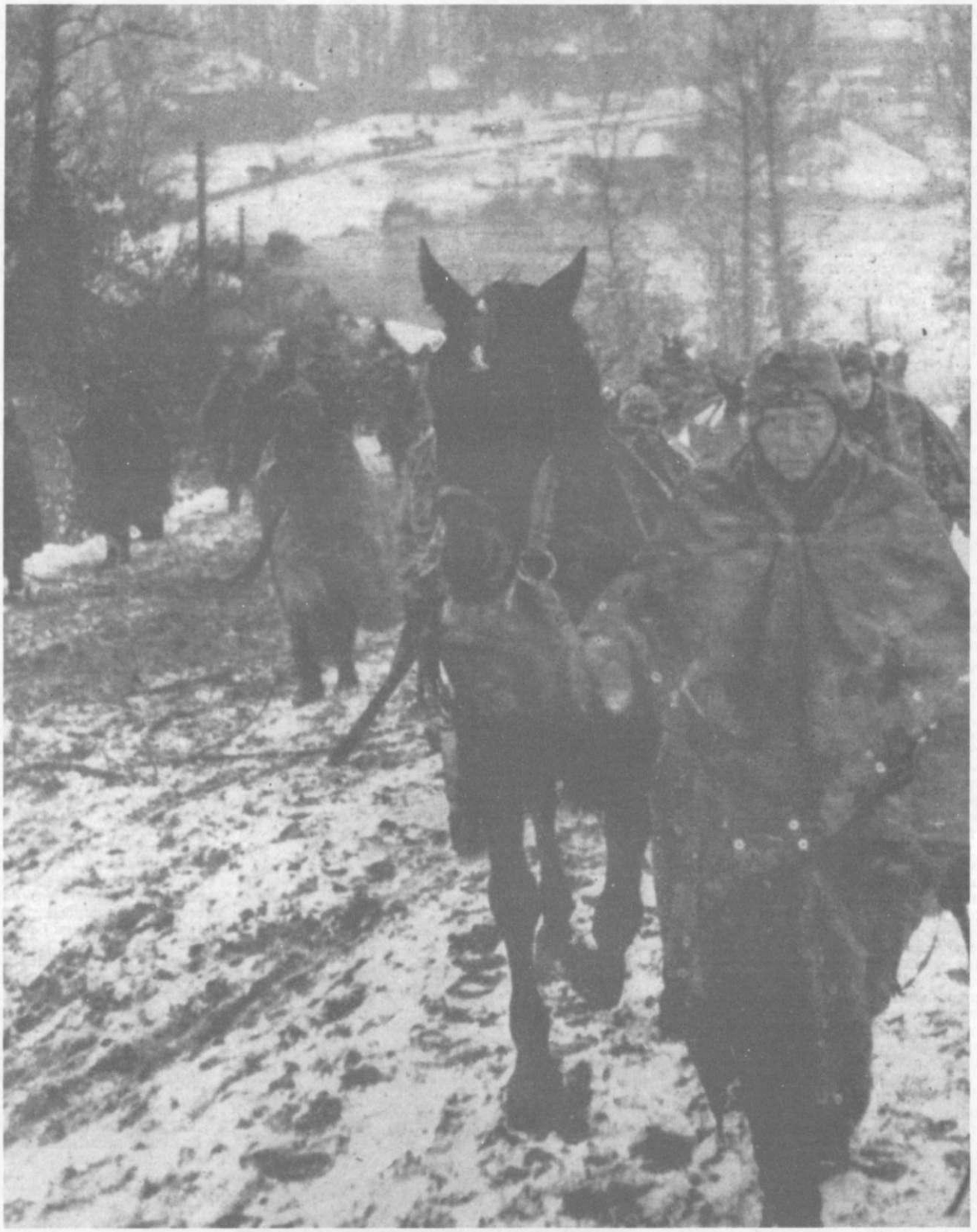
FOURPENCE

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

DEC. 10TH, 1941



'GENERAL WINTER' is now perhaps only a Colonel, as Mr. Maisky has put it, but at least the mud and snow have not improved matters for the German offensive. The Nazi soldiery, grim-faced and gloomy, plod wearily through sleet and rain, and at night bivouac in the desolate countryside with a temperature below freezing-point. German soldiers in Norway and Rumania are now being asked to give up a blanket each to send to their comrades on the Eastern Front. *Photo, Associated Press*

NO. 115 WILL BE PUBLISHED SATURDAY, DEC. 20

YOU WANT A MILLION WOMEN, MR. BEVIN?

So there is going to be an end of "this silly sex nonsense" in the matter of women's recruiting. "To me," Mr. Bevin stated the other day, "men and women are producing units for the war effort, and I approach the problem on terms of equality of men and women alike. I don't want these sloppy gossip column announcements about women. Women are intelligent beings, and should be treated as such." (*Chorus of women:* Thank you kindly, sir, she said.)

Certainly it is about time. Some of the appeals made of late to women to take their places in the ranks of the A.T.S. have been—well, sloppy. There have been appeals to the shy girl, the home girl, and the really intelligent girl. Columns have appeared describing the wonderful sort of work they will be asked to do, their hotel-like existence, the social advantages, the "good times" that are to be had by all. "What sort of job would you like to do?" asks the recruiting officer. "We will do our best to oblige." The uniform is being made smarter yet.

Now Mr. Bevin has frowned on this sort of thing. Posters will still have to be used to publicize the women's services—just as they were used in the early days of the last war to get recruits for Kitchener's Army—since the Minister of Labour has no power to compel anyone to become a woman in uniform. But so far as the munition factories are concerned, Mr. Bevin *has* that power, and he has declared his resolve to use it. And about time, too, many women will say. They are sick of being appealed to, cajoled, coaxed, wooed and wheedled, entreated and persuaded. They are just as indifferent to threats. If Mr. Bevin wants us, they ask, why doesn't he come and fetch us and tell us exactly what we have to do?

Since war began many hundreds of thousands of women and girls have joined the A.T.S., the W.R.N.S., and the W.A.A.F., and have taken their places in the factories and other centres of the nation's war effort. But very many more are required, if more and more men are to be released for the fighting line. Some months ago it was stated that 100,000 women were wanted for the A.T.S. alone before Christmas, and in various places recruiting campaigns have been organized, with loudspeakers, military bands and a kind of mobile Brains Trust to answer any and every question. But still not enough women have joined up. Some are held back by the desire to remain in their own localities—a matter which surely could be easily arranged; others want to be at home when their husbands come on leave; others complain of too much drill, suspect "influence" in the matter of promotion, and object to being regarded as mere substitutes for men. Then we have to remember that many women have to depend on their own resources and are obliged to think of "after the war" just as much as their brothers.

Then there is the munitions front. If the productive capacity of the country is to be utilized to the full a great army of women must be enlisted. "I have asked the younger women to leave home and go where their services are needed," said Mr. Bevin, at Middlesbrough, on November 16. "I want to get at least a million married women, either full or part-time—that is, half a day—in many of our munition works. If not in munition work, I want the married women to help in the distributive trades, in offices, and in commercial undertakings, and I want employers to utilize them for part-time, if not for full-time, work to release the younger mobile women to fill shells and make munitions. I must get these thousands of women into this terrific job."

No one will quarrel with Mr. Bevin's aim, but it is, to say the least, a little surprising to find these appeals coupled with the continued existence of considerable numbers of what have been called white-feather girls—girls, i.e. who, belonging for the most part to the more prosperous classes, are making no contribution to the war effort beyond, perhaps, an occasional attendance at the local hospital. Numbers of pin-money girls, it is said, have dodged the call-up by persuading Daddy or Uncle or a friend of Daddy's to find them comfortable and not badly-paid jobs. And this at a time when soldiers' wives are being urged to take up work in the factories. Day nurseries are to be provided for their children, true; but how much simpler it would be to pay the mother sufficient to enable her to remain at home and look after her own children? Surely *that* is a job which ought to be regarded as a reserved occupation.

To repeat, a million women are wanted urgently, at once. Mr. Bevin declares that he must have them. Why have they not come forward? One reason has been given above: that in all fairness many women feel that if the country wants them, then it should fetch them. But there are many other reasons. Here are four given by Mrs. Mavis Tate, M.P. for Frome. Uncertainty as to earnings is the first. Many women working in factories, says Mrs. Tate, are never sure what they are going to earn from one week to the next, while so low are the wages paid in many instances that a woman could not exist if it were not for the allowance she receives in respect of her soldier-husband. In other words, the State is subsidizing the private employer. A second reason is the lack of shopping facilities. Women who go out to work still have shopping to do, and when are they to do it? On leaving the factory or office after a hard day's work, they find that all the shops are shut; and if they wait until Saturday afternoons, though they may receive their rationed goods, all the unrationed supplies have been bought up long before. Shortage of nursery schools and centres is another reason militating against the employment of married women; women with young children must have somewhere to leave them, and not everybody has a granny or an aunt conveniently available. Finally, Mrs. Tate mentions inadequate transport facilities to and from work.

Yet other reasons were advanced by Lord Samuel in the debate in the House of Lords on Nov. 25. He criticized the system of interviewing and the medical examinations, declared canteens were inadequate and crèches insufficient, while trained women were put on unskilled jobs and had to work harmfully long hours. If the Ministry of Labour paid more attention to these things, it might find its appeals more fruitful, possibly very largely unnecessary.

But even if compulsion were applied to all Britain's womanhood, it might well be found that the number of women available is nothing like so large as it is often supposed to be. Comparisons with the last war are apt to mislead, since the conditions prevailing today, when women have invaded practically every field of employment, are very different from those of 1914. When the last war began only quite a small percentage of women and girls "went out to work." Most women were employed in the home. There were thousands of girls behind shop counters, but perhaps as many men. Even the typewriter was not an exclusively feminine possession, and few but the big banks and insurance companies employed a large female staff. The North had its thousands of mill girls, but for the rest, women were domestic servants, governesses, nursery maids. Oh, yes, and barmaids.

All the more credit, then, to those gallant pioneers of 25 years ago who, casting aside the trammels of Victorian propriety, took their places at the work bench or on the land. They said goodbye to hobble skirts and tight lacing, received or took "the key of the door," stayed out late, met a lot of strange "boys," learnt the joys of a comradeship between the classes such as they had never dreamed of. They were a grand set of women and they did a grand job. But in forcing wide open the door to women's employment they made any repetition of their achievement impossible. No more than its manhood is Britain's supply of woman-power inexhaustible.

E. Royston Pike

'MUNITIONETTES' OF 1917, though differing vastly in appearance from their daughters who are now carrying on the task, showed the same spirit of service and eagerness to help their menfolk at the Front.
Photo, Topical Press

They've Answered the Call!

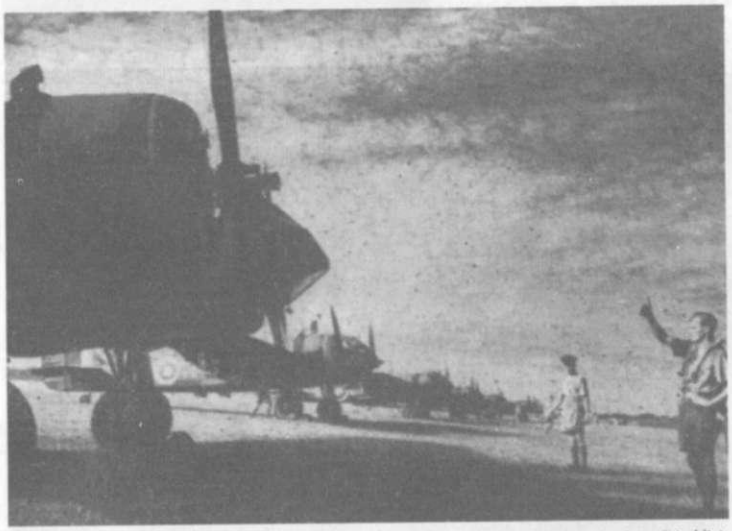
In one of the great factories where aeroplane parts are mass-produced, girl workers are dealing with a new batch of propellers and spinners (above).

IN A LONDON GASWORKS women take their turn at night-shift work in the retort house, "going to it" even during the height of air raids. Top left, a girl electric-welder employed on making goods wagons by the Southern Railway; she has thrown back the shield that protects her face. Top right, sixteen-year-old "trough" girl is happy in the laborious if somewhat dirty work of making iron gas and water pipes. By taking on such occupations women and girls are releasing men for the fighting services. *Photos, Topical, Keystone, Fox*

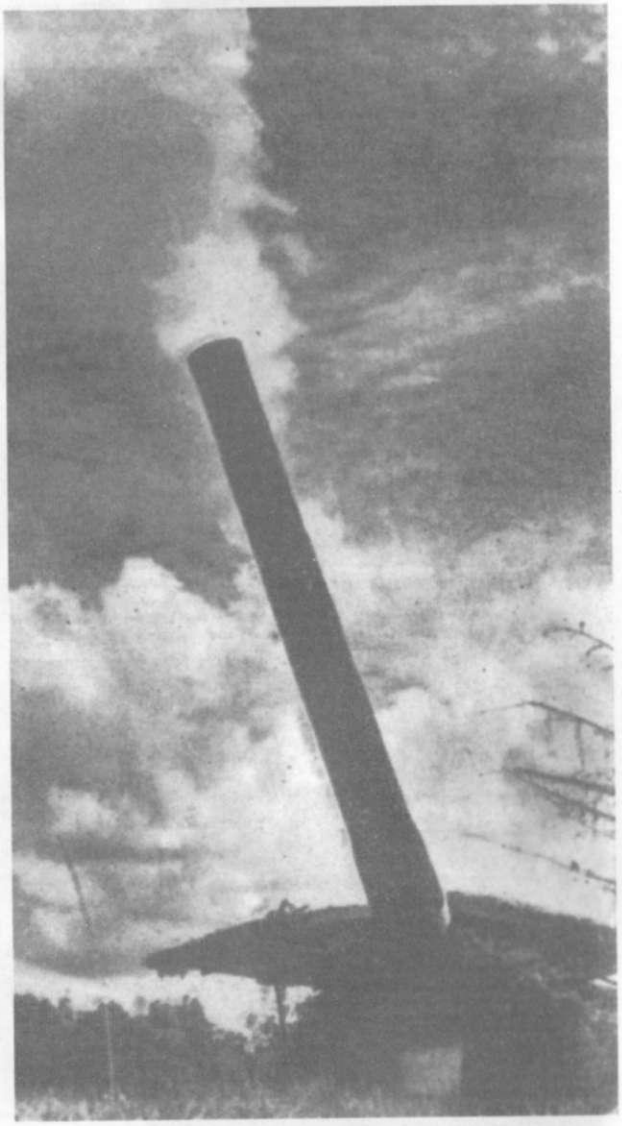
Driving a trolley of empty bomb-cases to the explosives department (left). At a Ministry of Supply tank factory a girl worker gets busy on caterpillar repairs (right).

Malaya's Defences Are Ready for Zero Hour

Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert BROOKE-POPHAM, C.-in-C., Far East, is here seen at Singapore naval base H.Q. in conference with his staff. Left, men of the A.I.F. in training advancing through pandanus palm jungle in Malaya.



A flight of Blenheim bombers about to take off from an airfield at Singapore to reinforce British defence positions in the northern part of Malaya. Considerable numbers of American aircraft have also been shipped to that country.



AT SINGAPORE the floating boom protecting the vital harbour is being overhauled by Malayan sailors (left). The floats and the cables connecting them are covered with sharp steel spikes. Right, one of the big coastal guns, with which the shore of Singapore Island is ringed, elevated for firing. The coastal artillery of Singapore has long been famous, and it has recently been powerfully reinforced.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press

What Is Behind the Strikes in America?

In Britain, the Trade Union movement is solidly behind the national war effort. In the U.S.A., however, the trade unions are divided into two rival camps, and numerous strikes are hampering the defence programme.

WHEN on Nov. 13 the House of Representatives in Washington came to vote on the Bill providing for the revision of the Neutrality Act, the Bill was carried by a majority of only 18—by 212 votes to 194. In the minority were found many generally firm supporters of President Roosevelt; in particular, some Democrats—the President's own party—from the Southern states voted against him. But they made it clear that they would not have done so if there was any possibility of the Bill being defeated. They had not the slightest objection to American ships being permitted to carry arms to Britain; indeed, they were strongly in favour of the proposal. But they were angered by the wave of strikes—especially the strike of 53,000 miners in the pits of the steel companies—and disgusted with the activities of certain Labour leaders. They thought that Mr. Roosevelt was not taking a sufficiently strong line on this issue, and so they voted against the Neutrality Bill by way of protest. Theirs were negative votes, as it were. They hoped that the President would realize their disgruntlement and see that the strike issue was firmly handled.

To understand the labour situation in America, one must realize that there are, in fact, two "T.U.C.s"—the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The A.F.L. was founded in 1881 by Samuel Gompers, who remained its president until his death in 1924, when he was succeeded by William Green. It is an organization of craft unions of skilled workers, both American and Canadian; and, unlike the British trade unions, is non-socialist, even non-political. A year ago its membership was stated to be 4,247,000.

Mr. Lewis of the C.I.O.

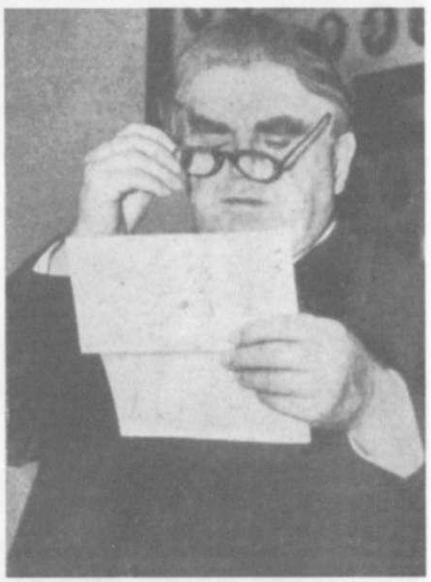
The C.I.O. dates only from 1935, when eight large unions broke away from the A.F.L. under the leadership of John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers Union, and established what was at first called the Committee for Industrial Organization. The C.I.O. set out to win the support of the unorganized, in large measure unskilled, workers, and its unions were based on industries instead of on crafts. From the beginning there was bitter rivalry between the A.F.L. and the C.I.O., but the C.I.O. unions went ahead rapidly, and a year ago it claimed that its membership was 3,559,000. When Mr. Roosevelt started his New Deal the C.I.O. gave it its support, both political and (so it was hinted) financial. But the relations between the Roosevelt Administration and the C.I.O. gradually cooled, particularly when many of the C.I.O. unions began to show traces of Communist influence. As Mr. Roosevelt leaned more and more towards the Allies, Mr. Lewis and the extremists in the C.I.O. became ever more hostile: in those days, it will be remembered, the Soviet was the ally of Germany. Mr. Lewis, indeed, became a leader of the Isolationists (though the C.I.O. is firmly anti-Hitler), and ere long developed into a most bitter opponent of the President, so that he was suspected of hating Roosevelt more than Hitler. Thus it was that when Mr. Roosevelt stood for a third term in the autumn of 1940, Mr. Lewis gave the C.I.O.'s backing to Mr. Wendell Willkie. Lewis, indeed, was so pronounced in his opposition that he swore that if the President were elected for a third term, he himself would resign the presidency of the C.I.O. Mr. Roosevelt was elected, and Mr. Lewis did resign. But, though he made way for Philip Murray, he is still the president of the United Mine Workers, and a real power in C.I.O. politics.

Strongly opposed as they are, the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. are united on at least two issues: the closed-shop and the check-off. By the first is meant the demand that when a union has organized a substantial proportion of the workers in a particular plant or business, then the employer shall make membership of that trade union a conditional service. This was the issue that led to the coal strike of Nov. 16; the Lewis union had 95 per cent of the workers in the "captive" (i.e. "company") mines of the steel companies, and called the strike to compel the remainder to join it. The check-off is sometimes insisted upon in addition; it means that the employer is required by the trade union not only to see that all his workpeople are members of the union, but to deduct their dues from their wage-packets and to hand them over to the union officials. Another feature of the trade union movement in the States is racketeering. British trade unions are registered under the Friendly Societies Acts, and must conduct themselves and their finances in accordance with rules laid down by the State. But in America there is no legal obligation on trade unions to publish their annual accounts, or even to hold annual conferences, so that in effect there is little or no check by the rank-and-file on the way things are run. This leads directly to racketeering, i.e. the complete subordination of every other interest to that of the inner circle of union members. Often there is an unholy combination of trade union and management executives to fleece the public more effectively.

Bearing these facts in mind, it is easier to understand the hostility against trade unions, which exists in the U.S.A. where there is no Labour Party as in England. Most Americans cling, at least in theory, to a rugged individualism, and the "log cabin to White House" is still a living tradition with them; perhaps it is true to say that in industrial legislation America is about fifty years behind Britain, and in business circles there are widespread criticism and opposition to Roosevelt's New Deal policies. This antagonism has been intensified by the wave of strikes which has swept over the country during the last year or two. Between August 1940 and August 1941 nearly 19 million man-days were lost through strikes.

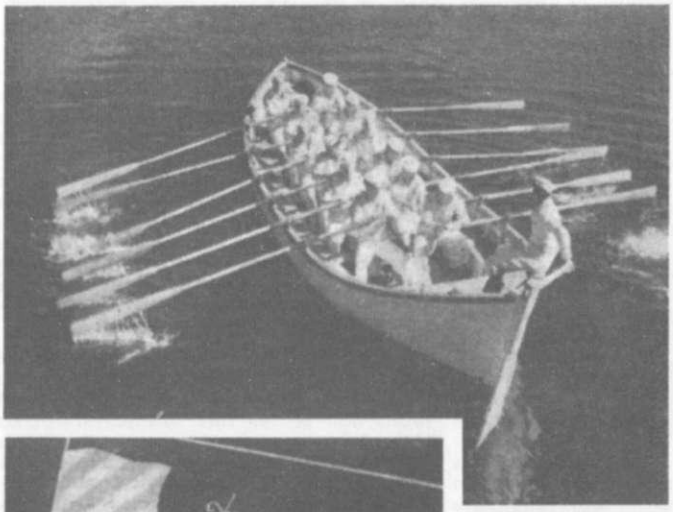
All the same, numerous and costly though these strikes have been and are, the time lost through them represents only a very small proportion of the total man-days worked. Only about a quarter of the strikes have been due to demands for better working conditions, wages and hours, while considerably more than half are connected with the question of collective bargaining.

U.S. soldiers on guard with their machine-guns when the army took over the N. American Aviation Co.'s plant in Inglewood, California, during a recent strike.
Photos, Wide World and Planet News



JOHN L. LEWIS, President of the United Mine Workers of America, reading his letter to President Roosevelt in which he rejected the latter's request to order the miners back to work. But on November 24 he called off the strike and agreed to arbitration.

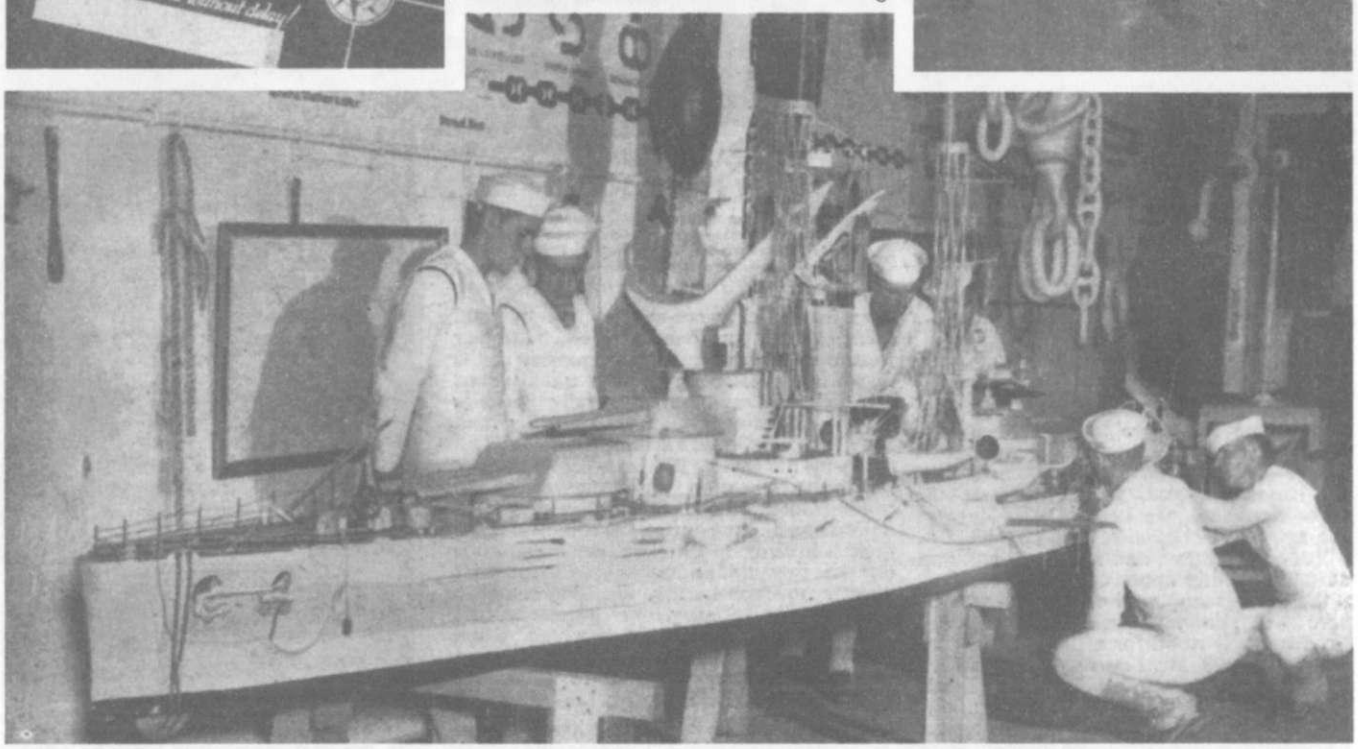
Sure, We're the Men for the Two-Ocean Navy!



At the Naval Training Station, Newport, Rhode Island, American sailors are practising their rowing in a whale-boat race (left). Right, a group of trainees lined up for gun-duty ; all equipment is carefully studied on land before the men are posted to a ship.

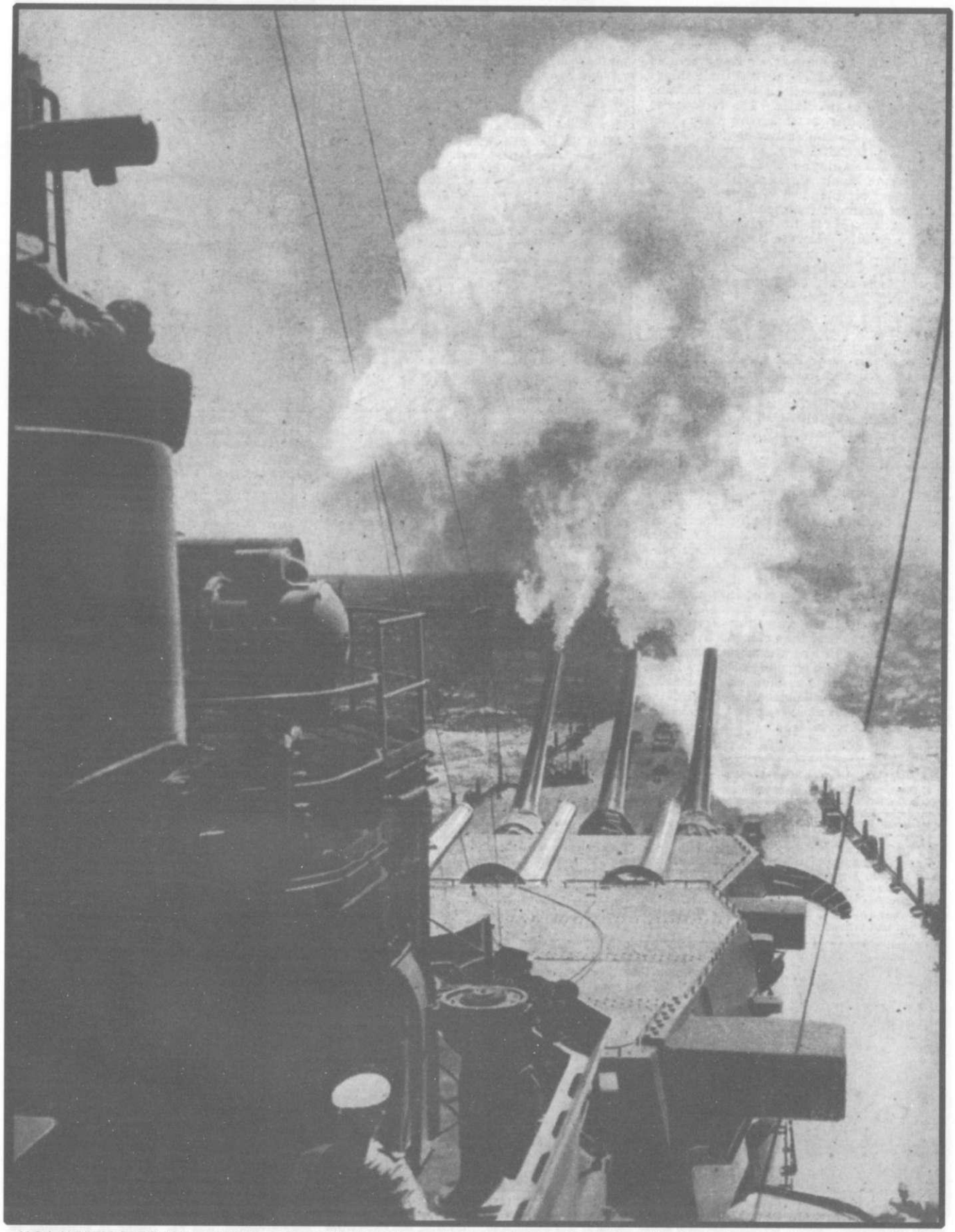
WHETHER the Japanese are bluffing or not, the United States Navy is resolutely preparing for battle. Since the war began America has had her eyes looking east and west. She has had to watch Japan in the Pacific, and get ready for any eventuality in the Atlantic. Behind British sea-power the U.S. has been carrying out a two-ocean navy policy, and it is hoped to complete it by 1944.

Although the United States Navy at present is far less powerful than the combined fleets of the Axis, America is determined to overhaul this disparity. The threat of Japanese aggression has done more than Hitlerism to awaken the United States to her peril, and her concentration on sea-power is of supreme importance to Allied strategy. New ships must mean a great addition to personnel, and a popular naval enlistment campaign has been proceeding for some months in the United States. In this page we see some of the new recruits to the call of the freedom of the seas in the course of training.



U.S. SAILORS studying a model in the rigging loft of the American Naval Training Station, Newport, to accustom themselves to the lay-out of a battleship. Centre, left, a recruiting poster which is helping to draw 11,000 men a month into naval service. Centre, right, recruits learning to march and turn correctly with the aid of footprints on the training ground. *Photos, Planet News, Exclusive to* THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

America Speaks! Let Aggressors Beware!



U.S.S. NORTH CAROLINA, mighty American battleship, firing a salvo from the triple 16-inch guns of her forward turret. First to be completed of six battleships of the Washington class, the North Carolina has a standard displacement of 35,000 tons and carries a main armament of nine 16-inch guns. Another photograph of this powerful unit of the U.S. Fleet appeared in Vol. 4, p. 545. Although some of the ships of this class were not originally scheduled for completion before 1943, it is probable that, in view of Japan's aggressive policy in the Pacific, they will take their fleet stations much sooner than was at first contemplated. The Washington was commissioned on May 15, 1941, and the Indiana was launched on Nov. 21. *Photo, Sport & General*

Our Searchlight on the War

HOUR OF DESTINY

AS we go to press it is much too soon to make either pronouncement or prognosis on the new battle of Libya. But these things are clear : it began well for Britain, it came as a surprise to the Nazis. The Italians we need not consider as supplying more than animal and mineral material for desert-strewn junk that will have to be mopped up when the British Empire forces in the Western Desert have done their main job : the destruction of the two Panzer divisions, which the infamous traitors of Vichy secretly permitted the Huns to transport through French territorial waters to North Africa after the astounding British sweep of last winter, to the undoing of the improvised, and too swiftly successful advance of our Army of the Nile on Benghazi. The destruction of the Italian mechanized division will make slight demands on our forces while they are about the more serious task of destroying the Huns.

It is further clear that for the first time Britain is meeting Germany on equal terms of preparedness. Here is no Norway scramble, no hasty rush to Greece (at the cost of our Libyan defences) ; above all, no meeting of German might alongside a bemused ally dreaming of Maginot magic. But a Britain armed against a Germany no better armed, and the issue to all who believe in Britain should not long remain in doubt. It is another of the great moments of the War, and if it happens that at this stage the French traitors determine to place their sea power under German control when its collaboration with Britain would have assured an earlier end of the War and the salvaging of the French Empire, that will imply a long lengthening of the struggle and an eventual shrinkage of an Empire which those unworthy Frenchmen are willing to lose if they can but keep their jobs as helots of Hitler. The moment at which we write, with the Germans at Rostov, Japan threatening, America resolute in the Pacific, Turkey watching the Caucasian approach of the Nazis, and Britain moving against a Hitlerized North Africa, is indeed freighted with the destiny and doom of nations. J. A. H.

GENERALS AT GENERAL POST

On December 25, 1941, General Sir John Dill, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., A.D.C., will relinquish the appointment of Chief of the Imperial General Staff, on attaining the age of 60.—"*London Gazette*," *November 18, 1941*

HERE was a paragraph that caused both surprise and puzzlement. No wonder. For many months General Dill had been one of the great figures of the war. On his shoulders had fallen the frightening burden of reorganizing the Army after Dunkirk, and of directing it through the grim and crucial days of the Battle of Britain. Now he was to take up the post of Governor of Bombay, and in his place would reign General Sir Alan Brooke. "I have always been anxious that the young men in the Army should get on," he himself said. "That can only happen if the older men give way to them. You all know General Brooke and his fine record : I hand over the duty of Chief of Imperial General Staff to him with the greatest confidence."

What is the real reason for Dill's going ? asks the man-in-the-street. Is it just that generals are too old at 60 (and fit only to become Field-Marshals), or is it that in the more offensive phase of the war now opening we need generals of a different type ? To such questions satisfactory replies are not very obvious. But from the new men—from General Brooke, Lt.-Gen. Paget, who succeeds him as C.-in-C., Home Forces ; Lt.-Gen. Sir H. R. Pownall, who has been selected for a special appointment ; Maj.-Gen. A. E. Nye, the 45-year-old ex-ranker, who is to succeed General Pownall as Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff ; and Lt.-Gen. B. L. Montgomery, who takes over the South-Eastern Command in succession to Lt.-Gen. Paget—from these new men who are going to build on the foundations Field-Marshal Dill has laid the country expects much.

HE 'SANK' THE ARK ROYAL

For nearly 24 hours the German authorities hesitated to claim the sinking of the Ark Royal on November 14. Why ? Because they had already claimed to have sunk her in a dive-bombing attack in the North Sea more than two years ago, in September, 1939.

POOR Oberleutnant Franck ! He was the Luftwaffe pilot who "sank" the Ark Royal in the first month of the war. In fact, Franck never claimed to have sunk the great ship. In his original report he simply stated that he had spotted an aircraft-carrier in the North Sea and had dive-bombed it. Visibility was poor, but he believed that a 1,000-lb. bomb secured a direct hit.

That report was never released ; instead, Dr. Goebbels' Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda got busy and sank the Ark Royal Pictures depicting every phase of the sinking appeared in the German illustrated magazines. Franck's accounts got longer and more detailed, more dramatic. But Franck never wrote them, so we are told by an American journalist, William Bayles, who met him in Berlin. The climax came when Goering sent Franck a telegram of congratulation and conferred on him the Iron Cross, First Class. Franck was photographed hundreds of times wearing his Iron Cross, and became Public Hero No. 1. When it became known that the Ark Royal had *not* been sunk, Goebbels still continued to brag about the sinking ; his ministry even prepared an illustrated children's booklet called "How I sank the Ark Royal," and put Franck's name to it. Meanwhile, Franck's position in the Luftwaffe had become quite intolerable. He became the butt of jokes, and one of the secret broadcasting stations referred to him as Baron Franckhausen. Last spring things had come to such a pass that Franck was talking of suicide ; if he could only get up into a plane again, he said, he would dive it into the first ship he could find. So far as is known he is still alive ; but his should become a classic case among those who "have greatness thrust upon 'em."

Adm. SIR ROGER KEYES, who from July 17, 1940, until Oct. 19, 1941, was responsible for the organization of the Commandos.
Photo, Press Portrait Bureau

COMMANDOS LOSE KEYES—WHY?

Since July 1940, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Keyes had held an appointment for special duties—those duties being the organization and training of the special service troops known as Commandos. On November 16 it was revealed that Sir Roger's appointment had terminated on October 19.

FAMED as the commander of the glorious Zeebrugge raid on St. George's Day, 1918, Sir Roger Keyes came into prominence again in the spring of last year when in a debate in the House of Commons he made it known that he had offered to lead a naval raid on the Germans in Trondheim. His intervention in the debate was largely responsible for the fall of the Chamberlain administration. Shortly afterwards he was made British liaison officer with King Leopold, and it is largely through his advocacy that the King of the Belgians has been in some measure rehabilitated in popular esteem. Few people were aware of the fact that for the last 15 months he had been engaged on secret duties in connexion with the Commandos (see page 285), and only recently, indeed, was the existence of these made known.

Sir Roger has been generally regarded as one of our "real live gingers" ; all the greater, then, was the surprise when it became known that he had been "sacked." The matter was raised in the House of Commons on November 25, when the Admiral complained that he had been frustrated "in every worthwhile offensive action I have tried to undertake as Director of Combined Operations" and of the "cumbrous machine" in Whitehall "by which all offensive amphibious projects are strangled at their birth, or mangled after endless discussions in the many committees."

SIR JOHN DILL, who relinquishes the post of C.I.G.S. on Dec. 25, has been appointed Field-Marshal and will succeed Sir Roger Lumley as Governor of Bombay.

Gen. SIR ALAN BROOKE, who will succeed Sir John Dill as C.I.G.S., has been C.-in-C. Home Forces since July 1940. He led the 2nd Corps in Flanders.

Lt.-Gen. SIR HENRY POWNALL, Vice-C.I.G.S. since May 1941, who, it was announced, on Nov. 18, has been selected for a special appointment.

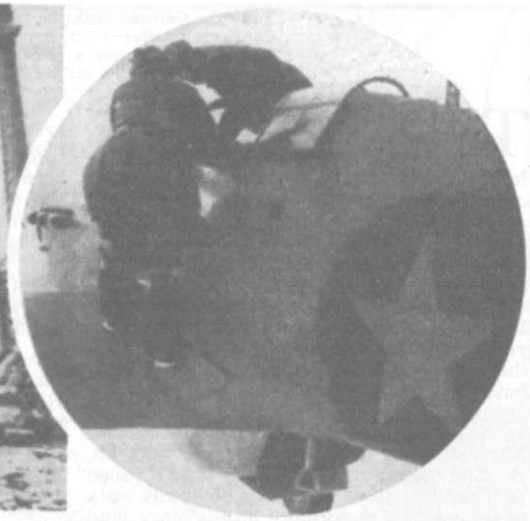
Maj.-Gen. A. E. NYE, who will succeed Sir Henry Pownall as Vice-C.I.G.S., has risen from the ranks. During the last war he served firstly as a private.

Lt.-Gen. B. C. T. PAGET, to succeed Sir Alan Brooke as C.-in-C. Home Forces, was responsible for the evacuation of our troops from Andalsnes, without loss.

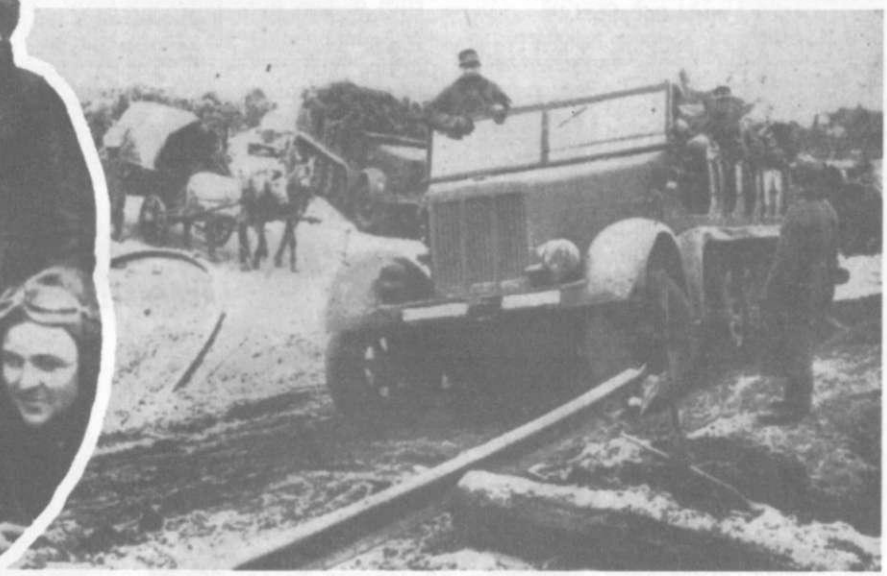
Lt.-Gen. B. L. MONTGOMERY, G.O.C.-in-C. South-Eastern Command in succession to Lt.-Gen. Paget, commanded a division in the Battle of France.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright ; Hay Wrightson, Sport & General, Planet News, Fox, Lafayette

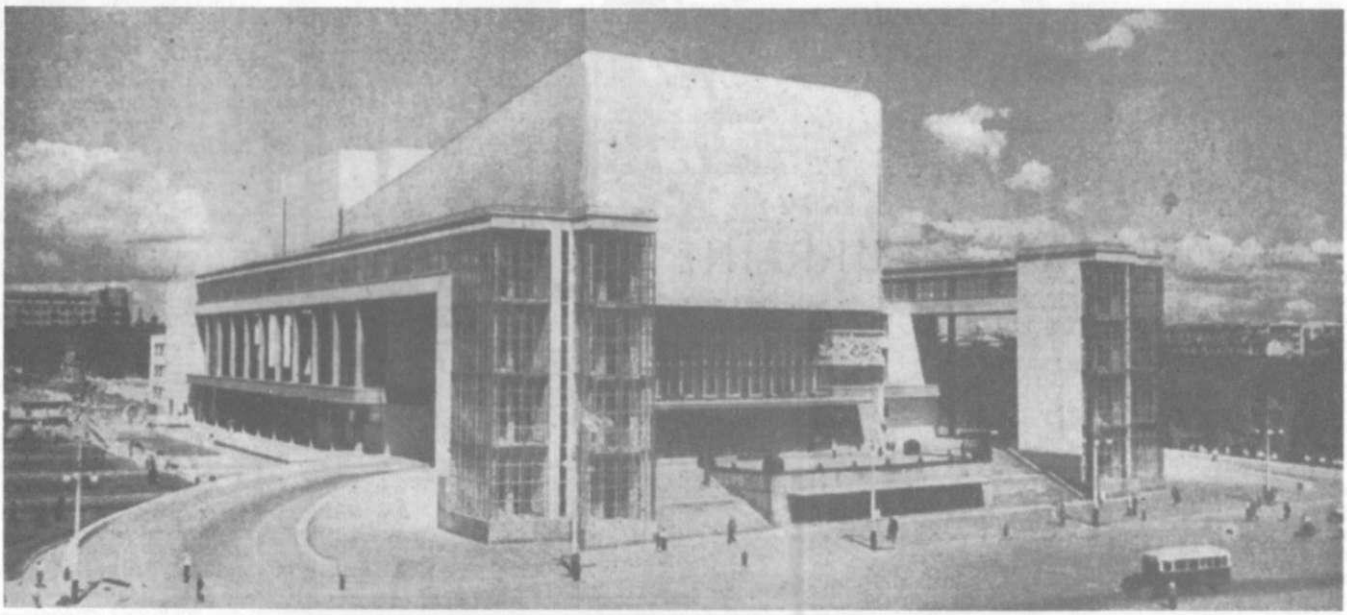
Bitter War in Russia's Blasted Countryside



AT KHARKOV, whose evacuation was announced by the Russians on Oct. 29, German troops cross a damaged bridge.



Circle, top right, the Hurricane presented to the Maj.-Gen. Commanding the Northern Red Fleet Air Arm by the R.A.F. The general is seen on the far side of the machine supervising adjustments. Circle, left, men of the Russian Fleet Air Arm.



ROSTOV ON DON, the remarkable New Theatre of which is seen above, was the scene of bitter street fighting when on Nov. 23 the German tanks were reported to have forced their way into the city. The Russians are leaving nothing of military value to the invading armies, and the photograph centre right shows how railway lines have been left completely destroyed as the Soviet troops fell back.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press and Planet News

If We Have to Fight in the Caucasus

With the German tanks battling in the streets of Rostov, the threat to the Allies' position in the Caucasus became much more pronounced. At last Hitler was nearing striking distance of the oilfields which were a primary objective in the invasion of Russia. This article describes the Caucasus from a military point of view ; a more general description is given in page 150.

THE Caucasus, with Persia, Iraq, and Syria, may well prove to be the great battlefield of 1942, General Sir Archibald Wavell, C.-in-C. in India, told a special correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" at New Delhi, on November 20. "It is difficult to predict whether any particular phase of the war will be decisive, but obviously, when and if the Germans strike out for the oil in the Caucasus and the oil in Iran, and seek to attack our mid-eastern positions, this region will become a main theatre of war. This is a possibility which we have clearly foreseen and are preparing against. In this region we should be fighting in the closest cooperation with the Russians. The main task now," the C.-in-C. went on, "is the organization of supply lines through Iraq and Iran (Persia). This is obviously work of the greatest importance and urgency, and it is now going on at full speed."

But it is these supply lines which are now being threatened by the German advance. On November 22 the Nazis claimed to have captured Rostov, the important city at the mouth of the Don through which runs the oil pipe-line from Baku and Grozny—the only pipe-line to Central Russia from the Caucasus oilfields. At the same time the Nazis had overrun the Crimean Peninsula, with the exception of Sebastopol, and were massing on the western shore of the Kerch Straits—only half a mile wide in places. From the north, then, by way of Rostov, and from the west from Kerch, the Caucasus (so generally considered to be the main economic and strategic objective of Hitler's eastern campaign) was now definitely threatened with invasion. If the Nazis could conquer the Caucasus, then not only would they be free of oil worries for years to come, not only would they secure supplies of other valuable raw materials, manganese in particular, but, just as important, they would cut the land bridge between Europe and Asia, across which Britain and America are sending aid to hard-pressed Russia.

Valuable as would be the Caucasus to Hitler, its possession is vital to the Allies in the Middle East. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the Caucasus must be successfully defended "if Russia is to continue to hold out"—to quote from an article by Heinrich Frey in "Die Zeitung," the German newspaper published in London—"not as a vast region of warring guerillas (so to speak, a Serbia multiplied a hundredfold), but as a first-class, organized military power—until the moment when the Anglo-Saxon war potential reaches its full effect."

But though the Germans are at the gates of the Caucasus, they have a hard struggle before them. Not for nothing has the region been described as one of the world's natural fortresses. The Caucasus Mountains, stretching from the Black Sea to the Caspian, are nowhere less than 250 miles in depth, and, with many peaks surpassing the height of Mont Blanc, stand like a huge wall barring the Axis from the oil-bearing region between Batum and Baku.

Across the mountains there are only two roads worthy of the name. One is Ossetian Highway, which links Batum via Kutais with the Grozny oilfields. More important is the Georgian Military Road—one of Europe's most famous highways—which connects Tiflis, the Georgian capital, with Ordzhonikidze. For 133 miles the road runs along the edge of precipices, crossing narrow ravines and deep defiles. It is one series of hairpin bends, and though its surface is good and fit for motor traffic, the road could easily be blocked by blowing up bridges and viaducts, and so should be impracticable for mechanized warfare. There is no railway through the High Caucasus, as it is called, but the main mountain mass is enclosed within a parallelogram of railways, which are linked with the main Russian system through Rostov, and through Tiflis with the systems of Iran and Turkey.

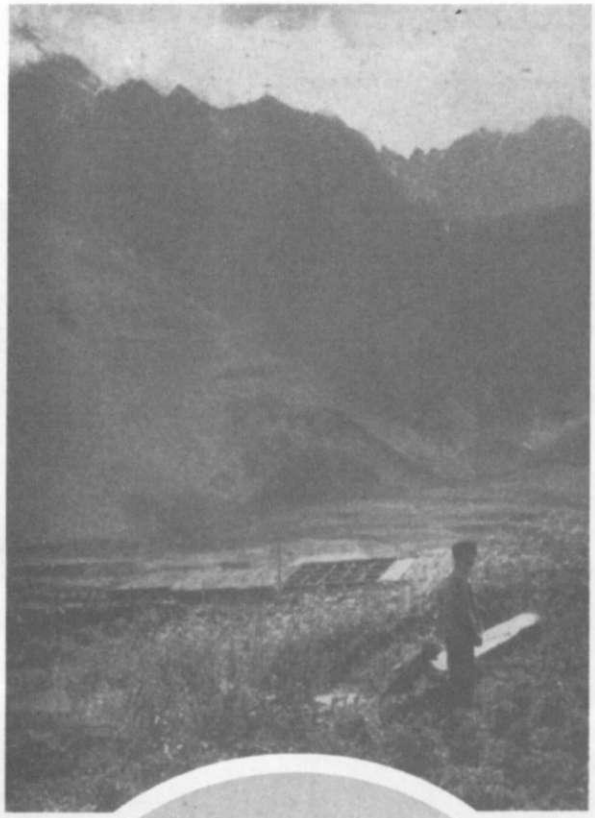
If the Germans do decide to attack the Caucasus, then it may be presumed they would endeavour to advance along the narrow coastal strips. But on the Black Sea side the mountains fall steeply to the sea from Novorossiisk to Sukhum, and it should be an easy matter to defend the long and narrow strip of shore, even against greatly superior numbers. On the Caspian coast, too, the mountains come down close to the sea. On paper it looks possible to land troops at Batum or Poti, but an attempt is hardly likely to be made so long as the Russian Black Sea Fleet is in existence.

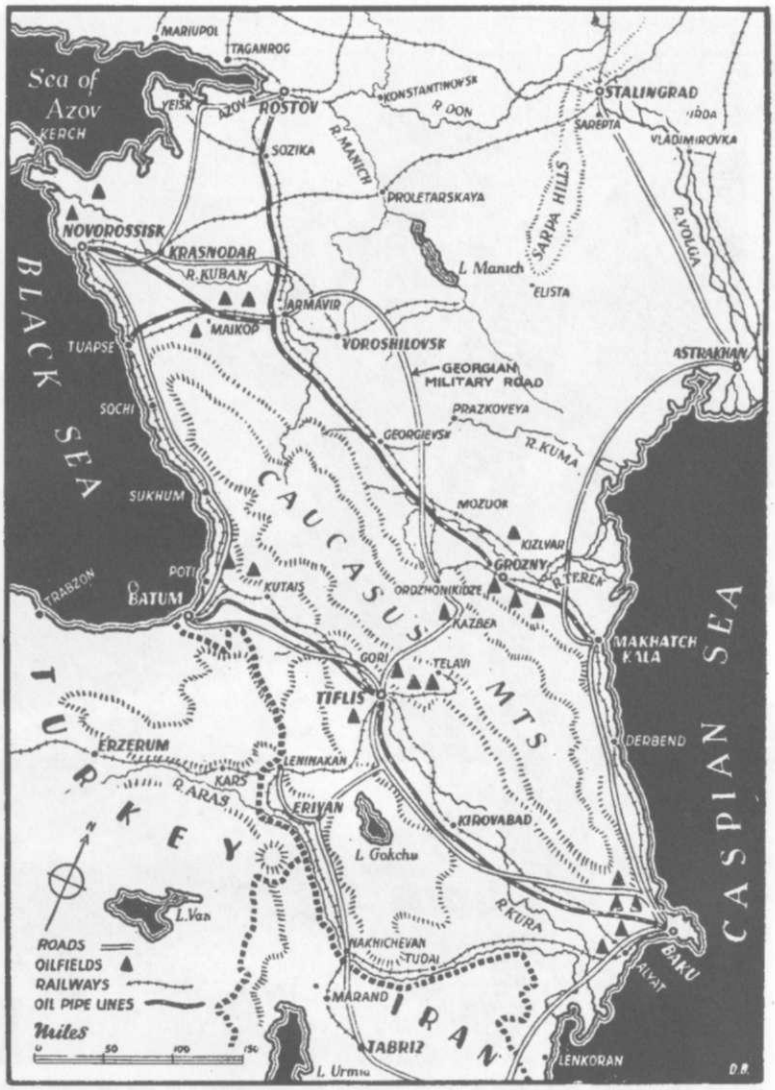
EASTERN FRONT'S VAST EXTENT is emphasized by this map upon which a same-scale silhouette of Great Britain is three times superimposed on the Russian front line. The dotted line shows the approximate battle line at the middle of November. *Map by courtesy of the "Daily Sketch"*

But it might be that the Germans would content themselves with an attack on the northern half of the Caucasus Isthmus. The oilfields at Grozny and Maikop are not so important as those at Baku, but they would be a godsend to Hitler's panzers. Moreover, the occupation of this region would block the supply channel from Iran into Russia, which is, undoubtedly, as we have seen, now one of the German's principal objectives. We may envisage, then, Hitler's mechanized hordes fighting their way from the Don across the Kalmuck steppes in an effort to reach Astrakhan on the Caspian. Arrived there, they might then seriously interfere with the passage of the tankers from Baku—the only means left open to Russia to receive oil from the Caucasus if, as we have supposed, the isthmus was cut. But the position of the German armies would not be too favourable, since to the north there would be the constant threat of the Russian armies and, in particular, of the new armies now being raised by Marshal Timoshenko ; while to the south, holding the line of the High Caucasus, would be the Allied army of British and Russians.

For months past General Wavell has had a kind of advanced H.Q. at Tiflis, and not far away in Iraq and Persia is a formidable Empire force, already numbering, so it is said, some 60,000 men. Some of the British troops may even be in position in the Caucasus. Before long we may be reading communiqués from G.H.Q., Tiflis—communiqués which may have to announce the most important news of the war.

Here the War's Decisive Battle May Be Fought





THE CAUCASUS REGION of Russia between the Black and the Caspian Seas and bordering upon Turkey and Iran. The Georgian Military Road is clearly marked, and the oil centres which are a principal objective of the Nazi invaders.

BATUM, a view in the Park of Culture and Rest (circle). The classic columns and entablature make a fine decorative effect against the background of the Caucasus mountains. In contrast, the top photograph shows the wild natural scenery at Kazbek not far from Ordzhonikidze.

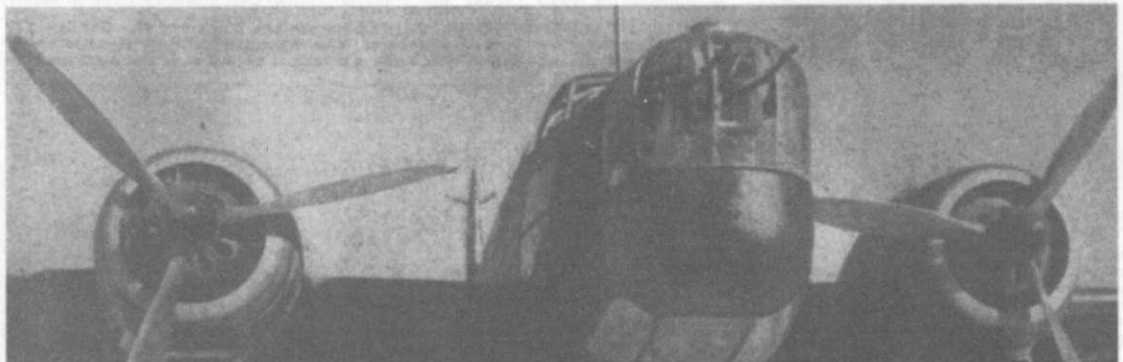
ACROSS THE CAUCASUS between Ordzhonikidze and Tiflis, runs the Georgian Military Road, a typical stretch of which is seen right. For centuries this highway has been a caravan route between Persia and Europe. Hitler's onslaught on Kerch and Rostov is preparatory to a drive into the Caucasus. The Nazis, however, are meeting with stubborn counter-attacks in the Kerch Straits aided by heavy Soviet coastal guns, bomber and fighter aeroplanes and motor torpedo-boats.

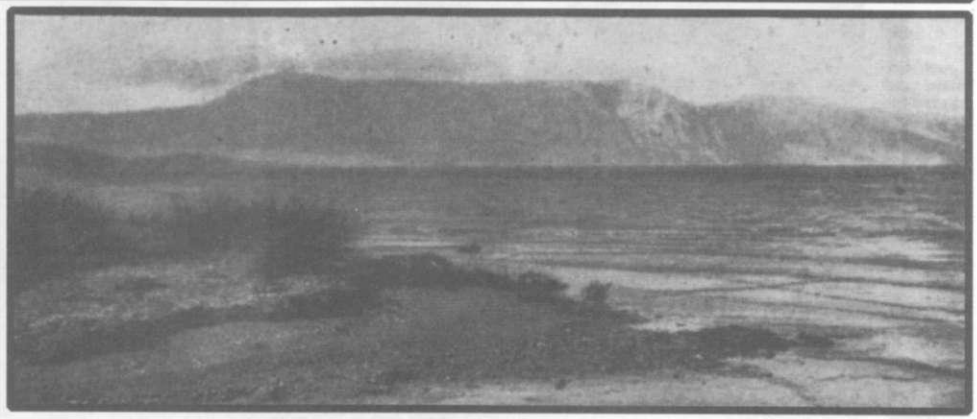
Photos, J. Allan Cash

'The Desert Army May Add a Page to History Which Will Rank Wit

NEAR TOBRUK
operating from th
helpin

GENERAL ERICH ROMMEL (back to camera), in command of the German Afrika Corps in Libya, inspecting the defences of Fort Capuzzo. Right, the commander of a British supply ship, carrying munitions to Tobruk, on the look-out.





THE MEDITERRANEAN has been well described as the strategic backbone of the British Empire. Among its many islands are Cyprus (left) and Pantelleria (right), belonging respectively to Britain and Italy. After the invasion of Crete both the garrison and the defences of Cyprus were greatly strengthened. In addition to British troops a Cyprus Volunteer Force recruited from amongst the Cypriots contributes to the defence of the island. Pantelleria, 60 miles S.W. of Sicily, is only 32 sq. miles in area, but is heavily fortified and, lying between Sicily and Tunis, was considered by the Italians a second Heligoland; but despite its commanding position it has not prevented the British Navy from obtaining mastery of the Mediterranean and was heavily bombarded by British naval units on September 28. Positions of both islands and the Libyan coastline are shown in the relief map of the Mediterranean (top).

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; E.N.A.

The Battle of Libya: The First Phase

What was described as the greatest desert battle in history, the greatest tank battle ever fought between Britons and Germans, perhaps the greatest battle ever fought on African soil, opened on November 18, when General Auchinleck's Eighth Army advanced against the Axis forces in the Western Desert. Below we give an account of the first phase in the campaign.

"GENTLEMEN, I am taking you into my confidence," General Sir Alan Cunningham, Commander of Britain's Eighth Army, told a group of war correspondents assembled at his desert headquarters on Sunday, November 16. "At dawn on Tuesday we will advance in Libya at selected places, from the sea down to the oasis of Jarabub." Naval cooperation? Swift came the reply: "Perfect. I spoke to my brother about it."

Thirty-six hours later the offensive was launched. "Imperial Forces under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Alan Cunningham, supported by formations of the R.A.F. under Vice-Marshal Coningham," announced Cairo on the night of November 19, "began at first light on November 18 an advance into Cyrenaica from the coast east of Sollum as far south as Jarabub. While pressure was rapidly exerted on the Axis forces holding defensive positions from Halfaya to Sidi Omar, British armoured formations, supported by New Zealand, South African, and Indian troops, crossed the frontier south of Sidi Omar. So skilfully had our fighting troops been insinuated into their concentration areas, so good were the arrangements for deception, camouflage, and dispersal, coupled with the support of our air forces, that enemy observation and interference from the air prior to and during the advance yesterday were negligible. By yesterday evening, in heavy rain, our forces had penetrated over 50 miles into enemy territory. Up to that time little or no enemy opposition had been encountered."

When the battle began, General Rommel's forces comprised two German armoured divisions, one Italian armoured division, and several divisions of Italian infantry. These were, for the most part, concentrated in the area between Tobruk and Sollum; report had it that Rommel was himself on the eve of launching an offensive. The British made no secret of the fact that their principal aim in the campaign was not the winning of territory—that could come later; the first and most important objective was the annihilation of the German panzer divisions. Cunningham's strategy was planned accordingly.

On the first day, as we have seen, the British armoured columns plunged through the wire on a 130-mile front, and swept west and north. By dark they were ranged along the escarpment from Sidi Omar to Bir el Gobi. On the next day they drove northwards, some making for Sidi Rezegh and Tobruk, while others raced past Sidi Omar in the direction of Bardia. There was a sharp brush at Gobi, where the Italian tanks were severely handled. Rezegh, 10 miles south-east of Tobruk's perimeter, was captured, although for some days yet it was to be the scene of fierce fighting. Meanwhile, the Bardia column had had a clash with a strong German tank force, in which the American light tanks, little 11-tonners, were in action for the first time; they were successful in tackling and driving off big German Mark 3 and Mark 4 tanks of 17 and 22 tons, with much heavier armament.

On the next day (November 20) Rommel threw into the fight the main German tank force which had been held back in reserve. There was a fierce struggle in the vicinity of Sidi Rezegh, and the Germans were reported to have lost 70 tanks and 33 armoured cars before they withdrew. At dawn on November 21 a column of British tanks sallied forth from Tobruk to join up with their comrades at Rezegh; but although they made considerable progress, the gap was not completely closed. In fact, the British at Rezegh were heavily engaged in an attempt to cut off the retreat of the main German tank force, estimated at about 180 tanks, which was endeavouring to cut its way out past El Adem. With tank columns closing in on them from three sides, and attacked at the same time from the air, the German column was soon in difficulties and was compelled to retreat towards the coast.

A vivid account of the fighting on that Friday morning came from a R.A.F. fighter pilot, who flew at 4,000 feet above the battle. "Guns were blazing on all sides as these land cruisers made for each other," he said. "It was impossible to pick out from our position which was which. Most of them were on the move, but there were several stationary and no longer firing. Several hundreds of them appeared engaged in a grim show-down. It must have been a concentrated hell of shell against shell and steel against steel. It was like looking down on some huge prehistoric area with fire-breathing, scaly-hided monsters pitted against each other in a terrific struggle, lumbering slowly forward, swinging this way and that, each intent upon the destruction of the other."

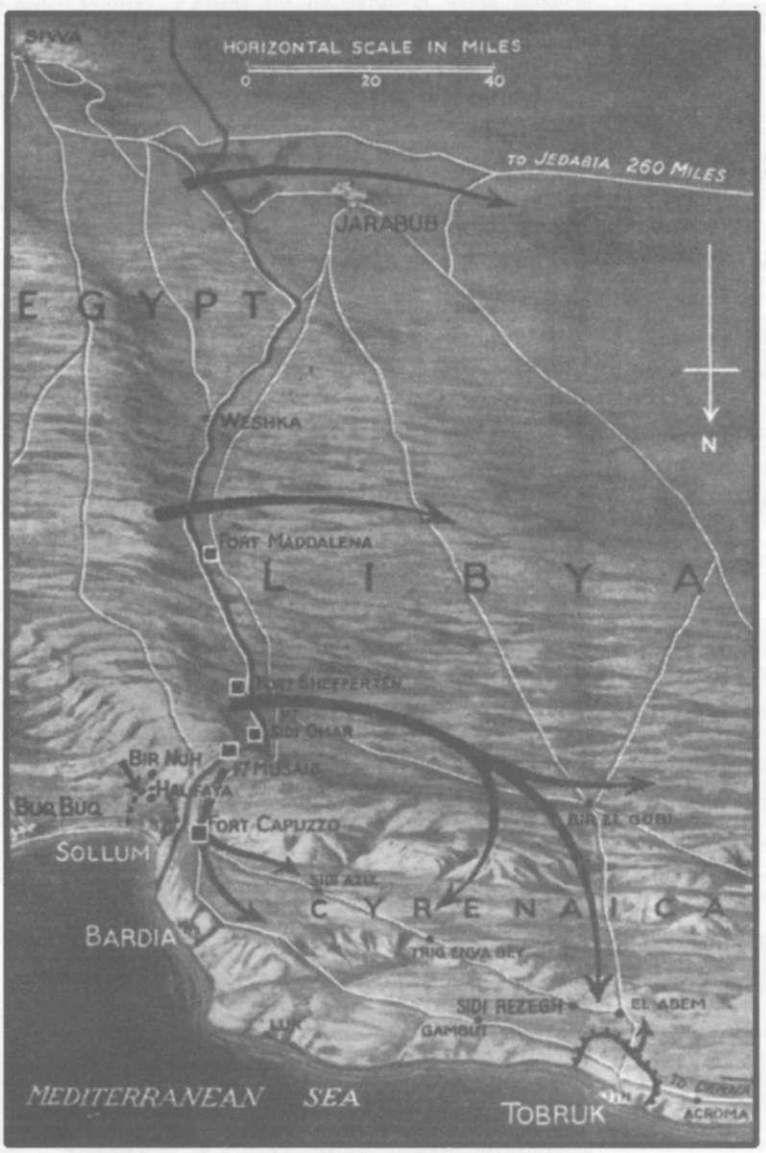
By now much of the ground in the neighbourhood of Sidi Omar had been cleared of the enemy tanks, and so it was possible to develop a thrust towards the coast at Bardia. New Zealand forces, in the face of exceptional climatic difficulties — it had been raining hard for some days so that the desert sands were churned into a sticky morass — stormed Fort Capuzzo and Sidi Aziz, and occupied Bardia, which was reported clear of the enemy. At the same time Indian troops made some progress between Halfaya Pass and Sidi Omar.

But the main battle was still in the vicinity of Sidi Rezegh, where the British and German tanks were battling furiously. Wrote Guy Harriott, of the "Daily Telegraph," who was there:

"The enemy tanks were firing with everything they had, storming forward at full speed with shells from their artillery bursting in front of them. Our gunners, firing at point-blank range as fast as they could load, smashed their shells into tank after tank, blowing off their tracks and ripping their sides. No armour in the world could withstand gunfire at that range.

"Some of the tanks crashed to a halt in ruins almost on the muzzles of our guns. Others, hard hit, tried to limp away. The charge wavered and broke. Grey-brown-clad figures leapt from the turrets of their shattered tanks and ran aimlessly across the littered desert."

At this stage of the fighting commentators in Cairo and London expressed the opinion that the first phase of the battle was over. Cunningham had succeeded in his first objective: he had, that is, split the enemy forces into fragments, since one group was centred about Sollum, another near Gambut (which was captured by the New Zealanders on November 24), a third was south of Tobruk, while a fourth was near El Gobi. The second phase was about to begin. Annihilation was the watchword.



LIBYA BATTLEGROUND, showing the main lines of advance by General Cunningham's forces after the launching of the British offensive on Nov. 18. Contact was made with the Tobruk garrison on the morning of Nov. 27, and so Rommel's main road of retreat to the west was cut.

Relief map specially drawn for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *by Félix Gardon*

Our Diary of the War

SUNDAY, NOV. 16, 1941 *806th day*

Russian Front.—German attacks renewed at Kalinin. Bitter fighting around Sevastopol and Kerch. Germans claimed to have cut railway to Vologda, near Tikhvin, in the Leningrad sector.

Africa.—Official announcement from Cairo of formation of British Eighth Army in the Western Desert.

Home Front.—Two German bombers shot down off E. Coast in daylight.

General.—Large Canadian force landed at Hong Kong.

MONDAY, NOV. 17 *807th day*

Air.—Targets in N. France attacked by Fighter Command.

Russian Front.—Particularly fierce fighting around Kalinin. German attack at Volokalamsk smashed by Gen. Rokossovski.

Mediterranean.—Night attack on Naples by R.A.F.

Home.—Bombs fell at night in E. Anglia and in S.W. England.

General.—Alfred Rosenberg appointed Reich Minister for the occupied Eastern territory. President Roosevelt signed bill to revise Neutrality Act.

TUESDAY, NOV. 18 *808th day*

Air.—R.A.F. offensive sweep over N. France.

Russian Front.—German push towards Voronej, 290 miles S.E. of Moscow held by Gen. Gordnianski's forces.

Mediterranean.—Night attack on Naples by R.A.F.

Africa.—British 8th Army, under the command of Lt.-Gen. Sir Alan Cunningham, began big drive into Libya at dawn from the coast east of Sollum as far south as Jarabub.

Home.—Important changes in the High Command of the British Army announced. E. Coast town bombed at night by two enemy raiders.

General.—Japanese envoys had three-hour talk with Mr. Cordell Hull in Washington.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 19 *809th day*

Sea.—One E-Boat sunk, two probably sunk and others damaged during night engagement off E. Coast.

Russian Front.—Particularly fierce fighting in the Rostov, Kalinin and Volokolamsk sectors.

Mediterranean.—Naples and Brindisi raided by R.A.F.

Africa.—British forces penetrated to a depth of 50 miles on a front of 130 miles.

General.—Vichy government dismissed Gen. Weygand from his post as Delegate-General in N. Africa and C.-in-C. of French forces in Algeria. General Juin appointed C.-in-C. of French forces in N. Africa.

THURSDAY, NOV. 20 *810th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced sinking of U-Boat presumed to have sunk the Ark Royal by the corvette Marigold. 34 of the crew captured.

Air.—Spitfires attacked E-Boats off Dutch coast.

Russian Front.—Germans launched new offensive on Moscow front. Russians announced evacuation of Kerch. Three enemy transports and a tanker were sunk in the Barents Sea.

Mediterranean.—Enemy tanker and supply ship torpedoed.

Africa.—Capture of Sidi Rezegh by British announced.

FRIDAY, NOV. 21 *811th day*

Russian Front.—Moscow reported a "serious situation" at Tula, south of the capital, where the Germans launched a very heavy new offensive.

Mediterranean.—Naples, Brindisi and Messina raided by R.A.F.

Africa.—Rapid British thrust towards Tobruk split up German armoured forces. Large force trapped in coastal area between Gambut and Capuzzo. Germans lost 130 tanks. British troops from Tobruk made a sortie supported by tanks. In Abyssinia strong enemy positions at Kulkaber and Ferroaber, east of Lake Tana, heavily attacked. The Italian garrisons surrendered. Prisoners numbered 1,800. Italian garrison at Cirda encircled.

SATURDAY, NOV. 22 *812th day*

Air.—R.A.F. offensive sweep over N. France. 6 enemy planes destroyed.

Russian Front.—Germans claimed capture of Rostov, but Russians stated that street fighting was still in progress there. Moscow attack widened. Successful Russian counter-attack near Novgorod, in the Leningrad sector.

Africa.—New Zealand forces recaptured Fort Capuzzo. Great tank battle raged in the triangle Capuzzo, Gabraleh, Sidi Rezegh.

SUNDAY, NOV. 23 *813th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced torpedoing in the Mediterranean of an enemy cruiser and a destroyer by submarine and the torpedoing of another cruiser by a naval plane.

Air.—Offensive sweep over N. France. Night attack on docks at Lorient, Brest and Dunkirk.

Russian Front.—Russians reported to have evacuated main forces from Rostov after inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. Fierce fighting at Kalinin and Volokolamsk.

Africa.—Gen. Rommel's forces split into four main groups. Bardia entered by New Zealanders. Another N.Z. force captured Sidi Aziz. Indian troops captured Sidi Omar Nuovo. 15,000 prisoners captured since battle began.

Home.—Two enemy raiders destroyed at night.

General.—Gen. Odic, Chief of Staff of French Air Force after the armistice and later Commander of French Air Force in N. Africa, rallied to Gen. de Gaulle. Small British raiding party landed at night on coast of Normandy. All returned.

MONDAY, NOV. 24 *814th day*

Air.—Stirlings of Bomber Command made a successful attack on enemy shipping off Dutch coast.

Russian Front.—Germans drove deep wedge into Russian lines near Klin, north-west of Moscow. Battles raged around Volokolamsk, Mojaisk, Narafominsk and Tula. Russian counter-attacks successful in Leningrad area and in Donetz sector. Germans claimed capture of Solnechaya Gora, 30 miles N.W. of Moscow.

Africa.—New Zealand units captured Gambut. Italian garrison at Gialo Oasis 150 miles south of Benghazi, overpowered by British motorised column. From Abyssinia it was reported that an Italian sortie from Gondar was defeated.

Home.—One enemy raider destroyed in slight night raid over Britain.

General.—Pres. Roosevelt authorized Lease-Lend aid to Gen. de Gaulle's forces. U.S. troops sent to Dutch Guiana to protect the bauxite mines.

TUESDAY, NOV. 25 *815th day*

Sea.—Admiralty communiqué announced that surface patrols in the Mediterranean sank an enemy convoy of two supply ships on Monday.

Russian Front.—Situation very serious in the Klin and Tula sectors of the Moscow front. Russia also reported hard fighting in the direction of Volokolamsk, Stalinogorsk and Rostov. Mr. Molotov sent a note to all non-Axis powers protesting against Germany's barbaric treatment of Russian prisoners.

Africa.—Cairo communiqué announced the entry of Indian troops into Augila, 100 miles S.E. of Jedabya. German attempt to smash a way out westward between the Imperial Army and the Tobruk garrison was checked by South African forces. Harbour at Benghazi bombed by R.A.F. during night of Nov. 24-25. Raids also made on aerodromes at Benina and Berka. Nairobi communiqué stated that British columns had captured Tadda Ridge, seven miles from Gondar.

Home.—Widespread but small scale activity over West of England at night. One enemy bomber was destroyed.

General.—Mr. William C. Bullitt, former U.S. Ambassador to France, given post as President Roosevelt's personal envoy in the Near East. U.S. troops arrived in Dutch Guiana. President Pedro Cerda of Chile died. Representatives of Axis countries and of puppet governments under their control went to Berlin to sign a protocol to the Anti-Communist pact.

SIGNING THE AMENDMENT of the United States Neutrality Act on November 13. The representatives standing behind the Speaker, Mr. Sam Rayburn, are, left to right, Messrs. F. T. Boland, J. W. McCormack, and Howard W. Smith. *Photo, Associated Press*

They Have Won Honours in Freedom's Cause

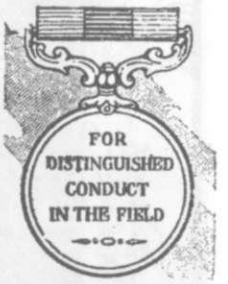
D.S.O.

Lt.-Comdr. Hodgekinson, D.S.O., for conspicuous courage and skill in the course of his naval duties.

P/O O. Yeats, D.S.M., for conspicuous courage. He served on the submarine Thunderbolt, formerly the Thetis.

Ord. Seaman A. Howarth, Albert Medal, for supporting a shipmate in a raging sea, though severely wounded himself.

Capt. W. S. Coughlan, Merchant Navy, **O.B.E.,** for bringing safely to port four lifeboats of survivors from sunk ship.



D.C.M.

Lieut. T. Archer, Bomb Disposal Squad, **G.C.,** for great courage in carrying out his hazardous duties.

Capt. Thomas Sharman, G.M., also for brave work in connexion with the disposal of bombs.

Sergt. Glen Moody, B.E.M., for gallant rescue work during a heavy bombing raid on Clydeside.

L.-Cpl. R. W. Etchells, M.M., for sticking to his A.A. gun, and bringing down three enemy planes.

Mr. W. A. Pullar, Edward Medal, for attempting to avert an explosion in a factory.

Sgt. Ronald Kells, D.C.M., for gallantry in the fighting around Tobruk.

F/O L. J. T. West, A.F.C., for devotion to duty. He has been in the R.A.F. for eighteen years and flying for half that time.

Sgt. Robbins, D.F.M., for carrying out a raid on military objectives in France with great skill and courage.

Flt.-Sgt. Loveitt, of Coventry, **D.F.M.,** for attacking the pocket battleship, Scharnhorst with an aerial torpedo.

Sgt.-Pilot J. Flint, D.F.M. and G.M., for flying home damaged plane and rescuing his navigator from the sea.

Flt.-Sgt. D. Kingaby, Second Bar to his D.F.M., for skill and courage; first pilot to be so honoured.

Flt.-Lieut. R. D. Max, D.F.C., for conspicuous bravery in raiding German warships at Brest and La Pallice.

P.-C. E. G. Pope, G.M., for great skill and courage in rescuing several persons during a heavy raid.

P.-C. W. Taylor, G.M., for bravery and presence of mind in rescue work during a heavy blitz.

Fireman E. Morgan, B.E.M., now receives the **G.M.,** for saving women trapped in the debris.

Fireman J. Coletta, G.M., for preventing a fire from spreading to the Wilberforce Museum, Hull.

Stn.-Offr. A. C. A. French, G.M., for saving an important London railway station and bridge.

Fireman L. Barclay Young, G.M., for rescuing two men and a girl from a bomb-crater.

Warden Alcock, of Coventry, **Bar to his B.E.M.,** for saving a man trapped in a wrecked house after a heavy raid.

Rev. A. Wellesley-Orr, Kingston-on-Thames Vicar, **M.B.E.,** for saving many lives during raids on the Kingston area.

Mr. H. F. Finch. of Finsbury, posthumously awarded the **G.M.,** for helping to rescue persons from a flooded basement.

Mr. T. J. Goodfellow, London fire watcher, **B.E.M.,** for being instrumental in saving several lives in the city.

Cpl. D. C. E. Wood, G.M., for walking into a minefield and helping to rescue a wounded comrade.

Mr. F. E. Mockford, G.M., for taking charge of all major incidents in the much blitzed Deptford area.

Miss B. M. Rendell, B.E.M., for brave conduct as watchroom A.F.S. attendant during the raids on Plymouth

Nurse M. Brown, of Coventry, **G.M.,** for bravery and devotion to duty in various raids on the city.

Matron A. Dolan, R.R.C., First Class, for great skill and courage during the Manchester blitzes.

Miss D. Jerome, B.E.M., for gallant work in evacuating patients from the London Chest Hospital during a raid.

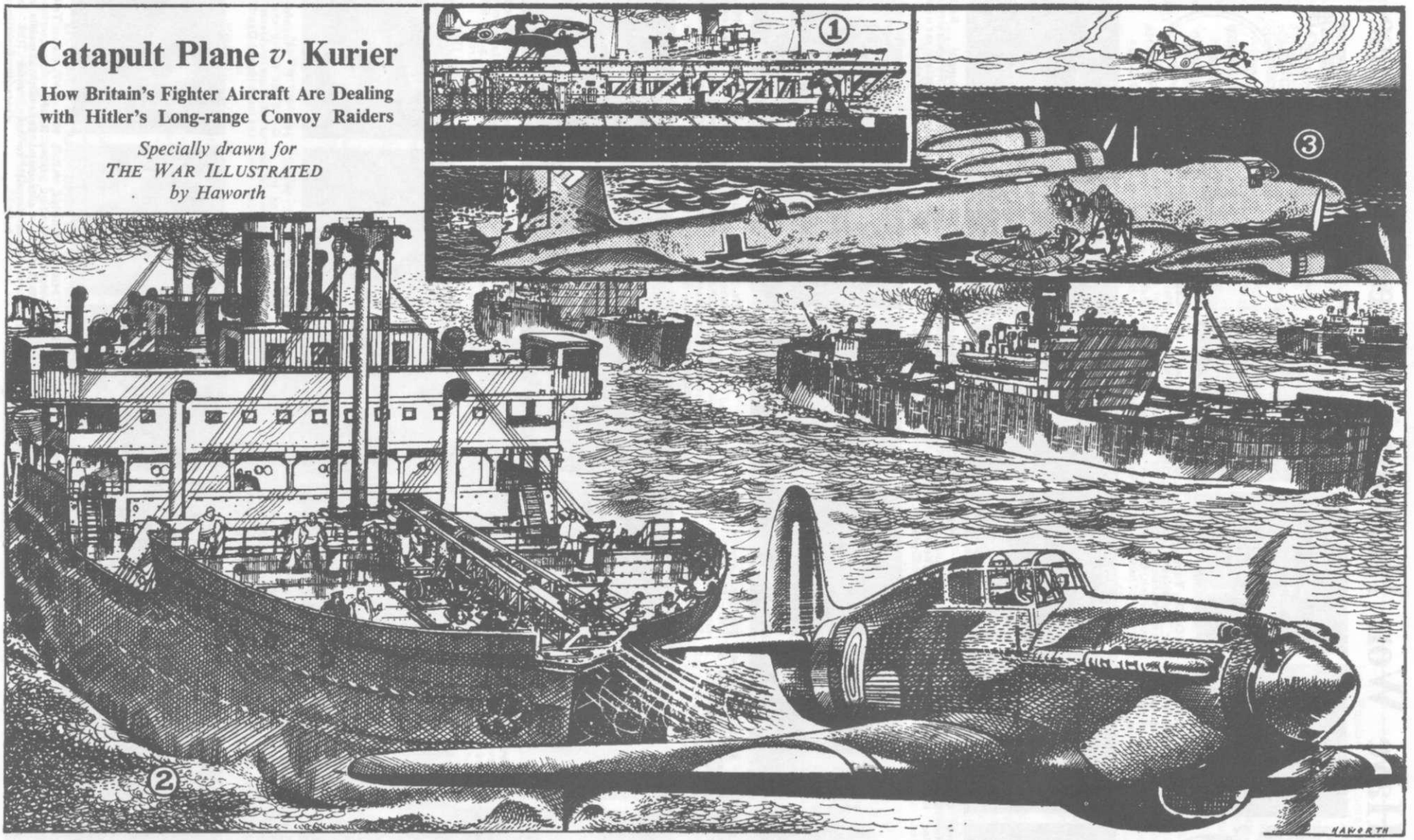
Miss B. Phillips, A.R.P. Mobile Nursing Unit, **B.E.M.,** for exceptional bravery and devotion to duty.

Mrs. W. A. Tribe, B.E.M., for continuous duty with a mobile canteen under the most dangerous conditions.

Catapult Plane *v.* Kurier

How Britain's Fighter Aircraft Are Dealing with Hitler's Long-range Convoy Raiders

Specially drawn for
THE WAR ILLUSTRATED
by Haworth



AS great a menace to our merchantmen on the Atlantic as the submarine is the huge four-engined Focke-Wulf Kurier (see Vol. 4, p. 392), a strengthened military version of the Focke-Wulf Kondor air liner and troop carrier. These long-range bombers, operating mainly from Merignac aerodrome, near Bordeaux, can carry a bomb load of 6,000 lb., have a maximum speed of 280 m.p.h. at 18,000 ft., and have a range of about 2,300 miles. They carry a crew of five or six and are provided with a formidable armament.

To deal with attacks by these commerce raiders of the air, new methods of protection for shipping have been put into operation, and this drawing shows how certain merchantmen have been fitted with catapults from which fighter planes can be launched.

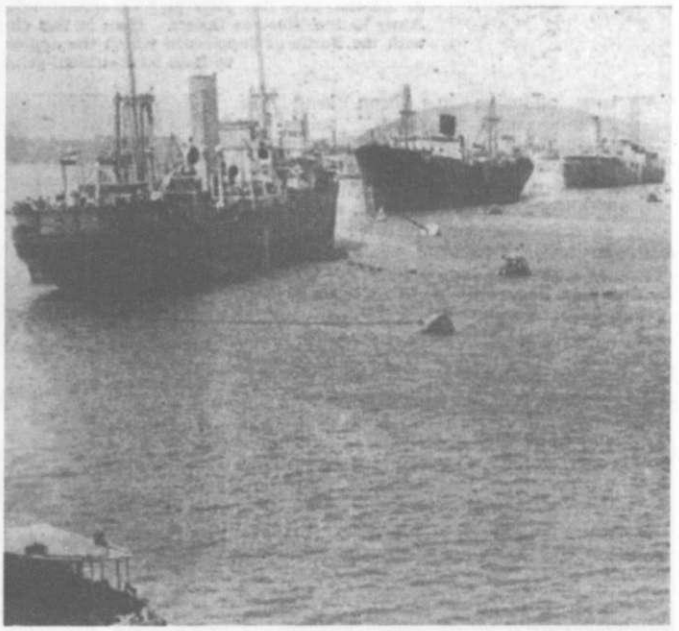
Drawing 1. A Kurier has appeared from the clouds and wheels to attack. The British fighter plane is ready on the catapult cradle, the engine is started, and the pilot, who may be a member of the Fleet Air Arm or the Fighter Command of the R.A.F., climbs into the cockpit. The crew stand by to operate the firing mechanism of the catapult, which is power-operated. The catapult consists of a girder framework and a trolley, connected by wire ropes and pulleys to the ram of a cylinder. The cylinder is connected by a pipe to the chamber in which the charge is exploded, causing the ram to push the aircraft forward with sufficient velocity to make it air-borne at the end of its run.

Drawing 2. With a roar the fighter is air-borne and ready to intercept the raider.

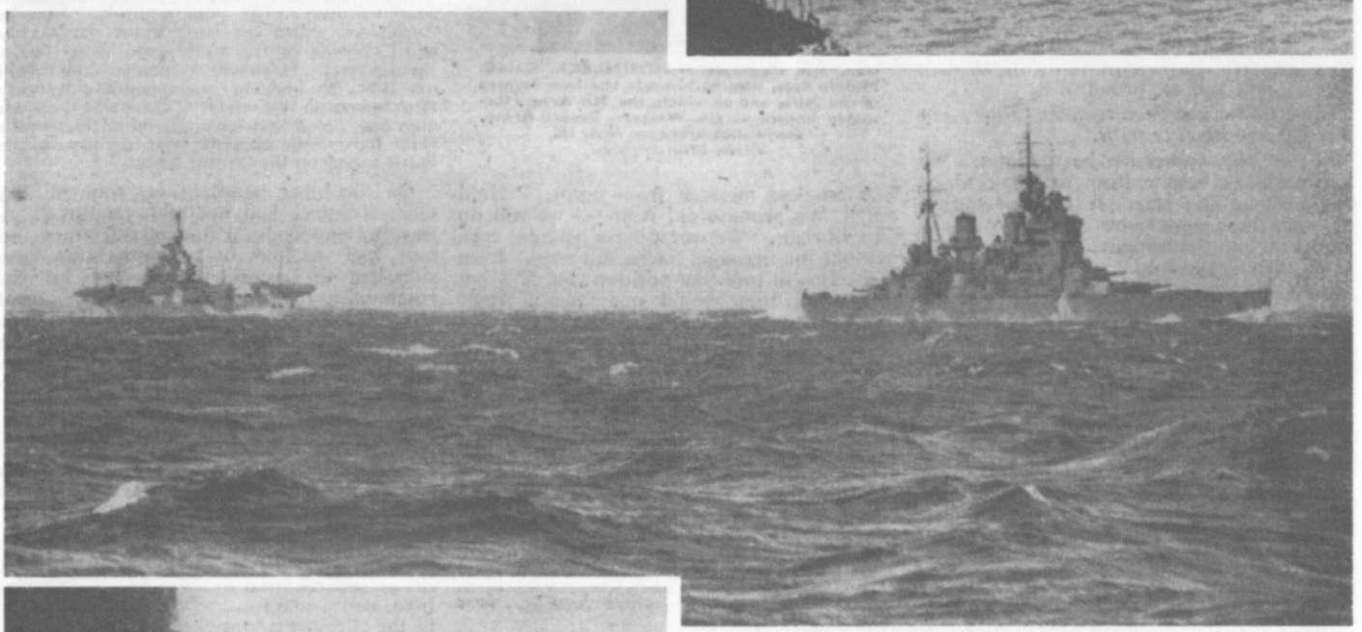
Drawing 3. The Kurier has been shot down into the sea and its crew are taking to their rubber boat. Meanwhile, the fighter plane wheels away and heads for the nearest shore base. Many of these pilots have succeeded in navigating their aircraft back to shore after combat under the most difficult conditions. If the fighter pilot knows that he is out of reach of land, his only alternative is to land in the sea as close to the ship as possible in order to be picked up.

This method of trade defence has proved very successful, and the Commander-in-Chief, Western Approaches, has congratulated the pilots engaged in this hazardous work on the skill they have displayed.

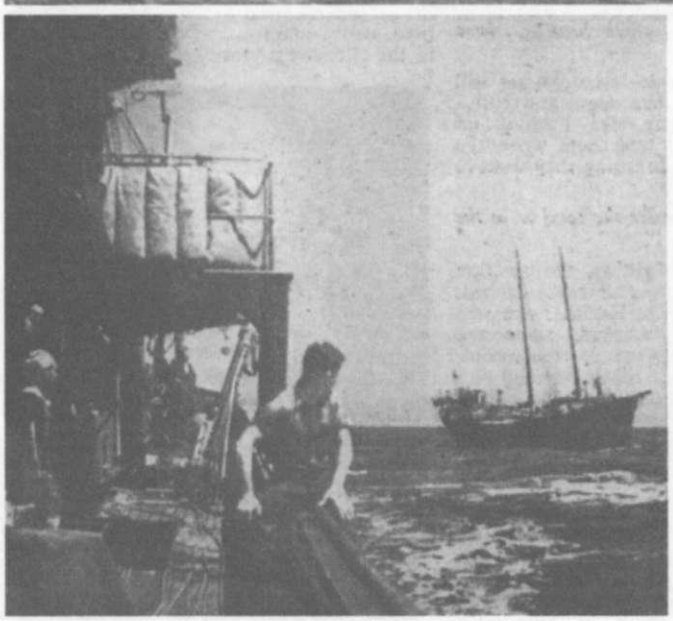
Ships and Men in the Battle of the Seas

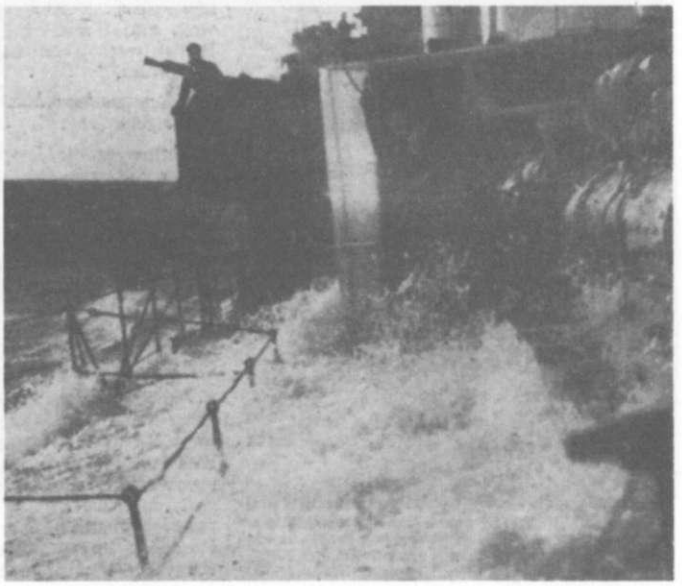


Survivors from a bombed ship, crowded in a whale-boat, are nearing the rescuing destroyer. Right, a convoy of merchantmen, moored temporarily at Aden, ready at any moment for the perilous voyage.



H.M.S. VICTORIOUS and H.M.S. KING GEORGE V. The 23,000-ton aircraft carrier is 753 feet long and is armed with sixteen 4·5-in. dual-purpose guns. Both ships took part in hunting down the Bismarck.





Friend or foe? A British minesweeper in the Mediterranean takes a critical look at a passing craft. Right, a British destroyer engaged in the Atlantic battle ships a green sea.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Central Press

How They Made Ready for the Offensive

In another page (see page 327) we tell of the opening of the great offensive by Britain's Eighth Army in the Western Desert. Here in this chapter we are concerned with what went before—with the Battle of Supplies in which the opposing forces contested not only with each other but with an environment grim and difficult in the extreme.

"THIS offensive has been long and elaborately prepared," said Mr. Churchill, in the House of Commons, "and we have waited for nearly five months in order that our army shall be well equipped with all those weapons that have made their mark in this new war." Five months—that takes us back to June, when the British attack on the German-Italian positions at Sollum was thwarted. The lessons of that unsuccessful fray were carefully noted, digested, taken to heart. Some of them, indeed, were pointed out by Sir Claude Auchinleck, C.-in-C. in the Middle East, himself, when in "Parade," a weekly illustrated magazine produced by a branch of G.H.Q. in Cairo, he commented on a number of extracts from a German officer's diary. Here are some of the extracts, with the General's comments thereon italicized.

The last golden glow of the setting sun fades. I have just finished my round of the advanced posts. Everything is in order. Although they have had to sacrifice all comforts and pleasures, the lads are in good spirits. They are the German outposts in Africa; they know it and are proud of it.

These fellows are good soldiers. They know their job and mean to do it.

At last the oppressive heat abates. We now get some respite from the flies, which nearly eat us alive here. It is hopeless arguing with these unwelcome guests. We sent about 100 into the hereafter in our tent alone—and then we gave up.

We are not the only ones to suffer discomfort. The Huns are probably worse off in this respect than we, as we know more about looking after ourselves. All the same, we must keep up to the mark in all those things which affect our health and comfort, so that we are fighting fit when the time comes.

June 16. No sleep all night. Fiendish heat. The Tommies seem to have encircled our position. Our supply column has not arrived today, or have the British nabbed it? It is just as well we have enough "squibs" to keep us going for a long time.

When we are feeling thirsty, hungry, and tired, in fact "all in," we should remember "the other fellow" is just as bad, if not worse. The one who sticks it longest wins.

Adm. SIR ANDREW CUNNINGHAM, C.-in-C. Mediterranean Fleet, is a brother of Gen. Cunningham who commands the 8th Army operating in Libya. *Photo, British Official*

Gen. SIR CLAUDE AUCHINLECK, C.-inC. Middle East, who commands the two Armies of the Nile, one of which, the 8th Army, formerly known as the Western Desert Army, drove into Libya on Nov. 18. *Photo, British Official*

A wireless message from corps, "Hold on." We promise old Rommel we will do that all right. We would have held on, even without the message, to the last man. Even if the British took the position (but it is not theirs yet) they would not take a single German soldier alive.

As I said before, these chaps have got guts and know their jobs. We have guns, too, and must know our job even better than they. As to the last sentence but one, we do get the German soldier now and again, and want a lot more of them. I hope you will get them for us.

Eating and sleeping had become things of the past. We were choking with thirst, but we finally forgot about drinking, too. No one talked. Silently and deliberately we did what had to be done.

They are tough and worth beating, these Germans.

Since the letters I wrote last week are still in my pocket I open them again and add a few words: "Everything fine. I am fit and well, and I am glad I was there when the British were given the thrashing they deserve at Sollum."

I hope we have him under the sand or in the bag before long.

Following the June fighting, the position in the Western Desert was almost stabilized. In Tobruk a considerable British force was isolated though not besieged, since the approach by sea was kept open, throughout, Tobruk was a hot spot, being bombed and shelled almost continuously, but the British Navy saw to it that it was well victualled. From time to time there was patrol activity on both sides, and the air forces were busy on reconnaissances.

As the months drew on, it became more and more clear that the enemy was becoming apprehensive. It was noticed that he was blasting rock and digging extra gun emplacements and trenches round Sollum and Tobruk and constructing a chain of observation towers reaching far out into the desert. Probably he suspected—what was, indeed, the fact—that the British forces in Egypt and Tobruk were being largely reinforced. So improved was the British position that on November 16 it was announced in Cairo that the forces in the Western Desert had been constituted as the Eighth Army, and it was revealed that the flow of supplies—of tanks, guns, aircraft and transport—to General Auchinleck's Imperial Army from Great Britain and America was working in most satisfactory fashion.

"I was there when the first American tanks were unloaded," said Mr. Averell Harriman, Mr. Roosevelt's personal representative in this country, in his B.B.C. Postscript on November 23. "Early one morning I went with General Auchinleck to inspect them. A sergeant of our army, one of a group of American soldiers who had come out to instruct your troops in the use of the tanks, proudly explained to Gen. Auchinleck the mechanism of the tank. Then he drove him in the tank to the neighbouring desert to show how it performed. I awaited their return with some concern. Our tanks are different from your tanks. Perhaps he would find ours wanting in some essential. The tank returned. General Auchinleck pulled his large frame out of the small opening in the turret, and with typical British brevity he turned to me and said 'She'll do. It's a fine weapon, manoeuvrable and sturdy. How many can you send?' This same tank and and many more that have arrived in the months since have been carrying your soldiers in the battle raging on the Libyan Desert."

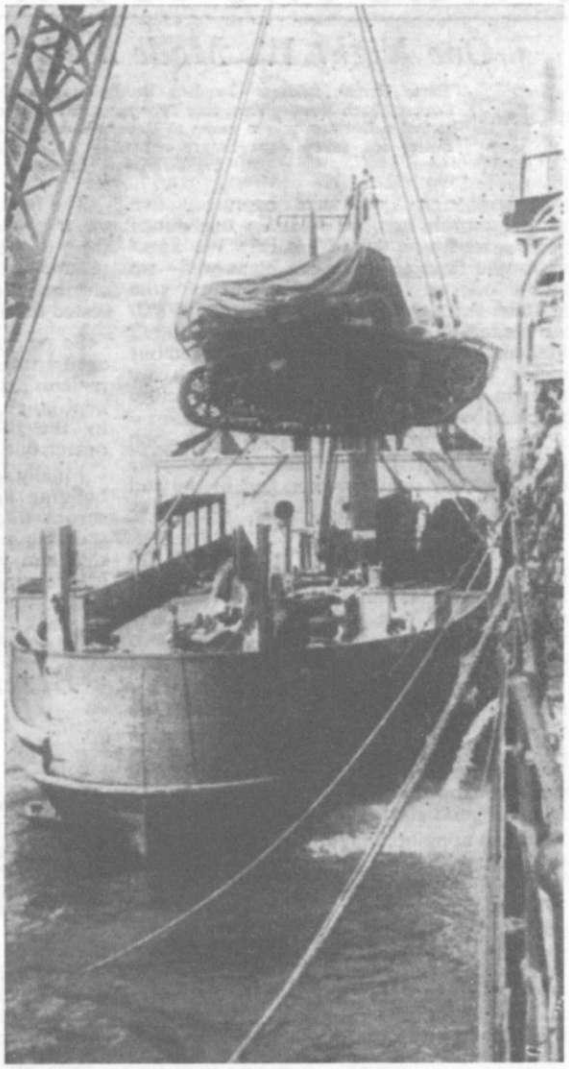
On the other hand, it was thought that Gen. Rommel had not been reinforced, at least to any considerable extent, since not only had his lines of communication been subjected to severe bombing, but his sea communications were now distinctly hazardous. Scores of Axis ships were torpedoed or seriously damaged, and this slaughter culminated in the annihilation of the two enemy convoys during the week-end of November 9 (see page 302), following which came reports that the bodies of 7,000 Italians had been washed ashore in Tunisia. While this submarine blitz was being maintained in the sea passage, the R.A.F. in the Middle East were subjecting the enemy to an air blitz.

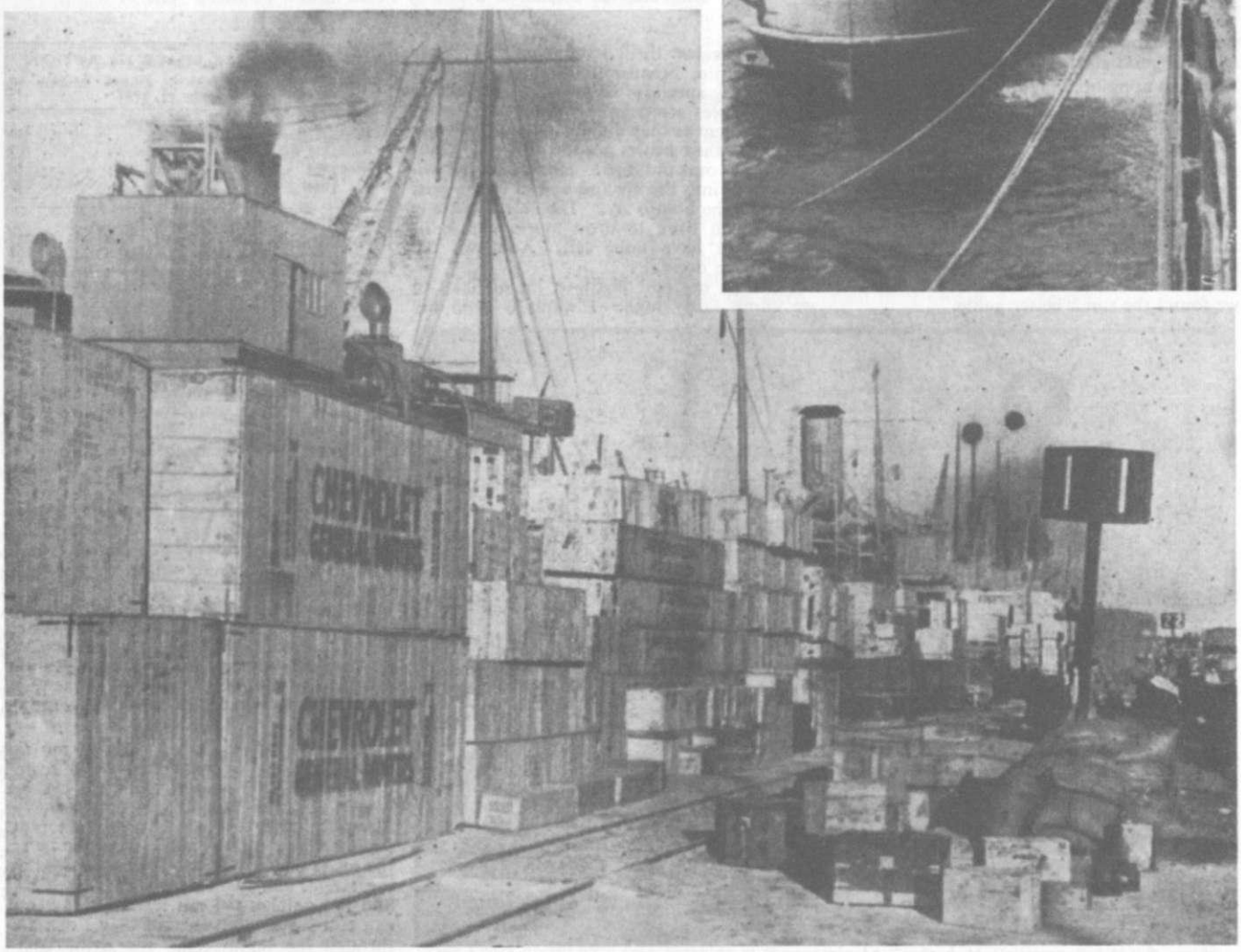
All this pointed to a vast reinforcement of the R.A.F. in the Middle East; indeed, it was reported that Air Vice-Marshal Coningham had squadrons where his predecessor in the offensive a year ago had planes.

Air Vice-Marshal ARTHUR CONINGHAM, A.O.C. Western Desert, is a 46-year-old New Zealander. He served in the Near East during the last war. *Photo, Wide World*

America Has a Part in the Libyan Campaign

Tins of fruit and vegetables for troops engaged in the Libya offensive at a Detail Issue Depot in the advanced area; the rations are collected and distributed by lorries, some fitted with refrigerators for fresh meat.





"Our supplies in the last few months have reached your forces in the Middle East," said Mr. Averell Harriman, the American Lease-Lend Administrator, on Nov. 23; "we hope and pray that our tanks and our planes are serving them well." Top right, American M 3 light tanks for General Cunningham are being landed in North Africa, while below is a huge shipload of stores which are about to be taken from the quayside to the advanced depots in the desert.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Sport & General

I Was There! .... Eye Witness Stories of the War

One Night We Made a Bolt from Benghazi

Three British soldiers—Leading Bombardier A. H. Hasler, Gunner J. J. Cocker (both Rhodesians), and Trooper A. R. Oldham (from Surrey)—broke out of a German prison camp at Benghazi and marched across the Libyan desert for seven days before contacting a British patrol. Bombardier Hasler's story follows.

As soon as we were captured, five months ago, we made up our minds we would try to escape. We knew we would have to make our plans well—we had a long way to go to the "wire" (the Frontier fence erected by the Italians). First, we needed an opportunity, then we required food and water. These last two provided our major problem, because we had, so we thought, about 400 miles to go before reaching safety.

There were 300 prisoners in our camp—200 of them Australians. Once a week we organized our own concerts, and at the end we sang "God Save the King" as loud as we could.

The Germans fed us badly—a roll of Italian bread and some weak coffee for breakfast at 5 a.m., while at midday we had macaroni soup and, on rare occasions, meat. They worked us 14 hours a day, but later got this down to 12 hours.

Every day we stored any tinned rations—sardines and Italian bully. Just as we were set to go, I fell ill with yellow jaundice. This put us back for a bit, but I soon got better. We could only escape by night, and we had to reckon on not being missed long enough to get a good start.

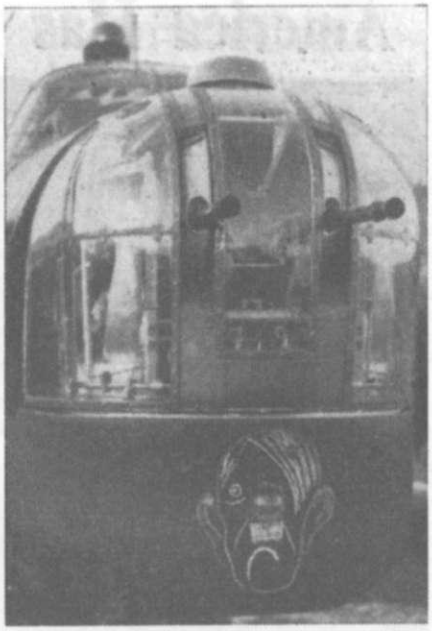
On the appointed night we slipped out and took cover in the grounds of the camp. We lay quiet for a moment, and then bolted.

From our first stop it was pretty easy going. We had enough rations for a 21-day journey—enough to keep us alive anyway. We had four water bottles apiece. Our map was torn from a German illustrated newspaper, and we had a poor compass—one of those things in the top of a fountain pen. Later we lost it; but its loss was not felt because we found the sun a better guide.

The first day we made 25 miles. At night we tried our best to sleep, but at half-past three in the morning it was too cold, and we resumed our march at that time. When the sun became unbearable later in the day we rested until it became cooler in the afternoon.

So on we went for seven days. We managed to strike a water point en route, and replenished our supplies. Day after day we kept going, spurred on, when we grew tired, by the thought that every step was one nearer our own army.

Finally one night we slept in a disused building and with the morning light were surprised to see the captain of a British patrol standing near us with a tommy gun. We told him who we were and from where we had escaped. He wasn't the least taken aback, but simply said, "would you like a lift back?"—*Reuter.*



HITLER OVER BERLIN! On this bomber of a Polish squadron which took part in a recent raid on Berlin is a caricature of Der Fuehrer himself. *Photo, L.N.A.*

Berlin's Burning—and We Poles Have Done It!

Here we reprint from "Wings," the fortnightly journal of the Polish Air Force, an account of a raid by Polish airmen on Berlin—told by a Polish officer to Jerzy Glebocki.

THE greatest thrill I ever had was over Berlin, because Berlin is something very special—the heart of Germany, and we Poles are over this city. The sirens wail for them as they did for us in September 1939, and their hearts are full of fear. Children cry as ours did then. Houses are thrown high, high into the air and vanish in the dust as we let the bombs fly. Then a red glare is pulling you back to drop more bombs, of which you have none left. And we, the Poles, have done it!

Berlin is my best flight—a lot of flak, so we climb fairly high. I want to drop my bomb-load well inside the target area, so I again check our course for the pilot. As we are approaching our objective I can see clearly the A.A. barrage in front of me. It is apparent that somebody is in, as the salvos are frequent and searchlights wander widely over the sky. The heavy A.A. barrage forms an outer circle, inside of which light A.A. guns and tracer bullets give a strange, but menacing picture.

We slowly lose height over our target. I check the safety catches of the bomb hatches. Now the A.A. fire is aiming at us as well as the searchlights being after us. Suddenly one gets a direct bearing on our plane. At once several others also cross their beams on us; the A.A. fire becomes definitely concentrated and very accurate. I lie stretched flat in the bomb aimer's turret, waiting to get a bearing with the bomb sight on to the target. I give the pilot an abrupt warning to keep on his course as we are going in!

Suddenly I feel a sharp pain in my right leg. I become overwhelmed by a rush of heat stiffness. I report that I have been wounded. The second pilot crawls into my turret in order to help me. I pull myself together after a short while in order to keep the plane on the course. We were right over the target. In front of my eyes I see green and red patches; I am feeling giddy, but I can still see the target, and now I can see it through the bomb sight, the string well in the middle of it; now . . . I press the button to free the bombs. In a tenth of a second I can see the parting load, then they

POLAND'S AIR FORCE IN ACTION
From time of arrival in Great Britain to November 11, 1941

Fighter Squadrons	
Enemy aircraft destroyed	410
Probably destroyed	108
Damaged	52
Total	About 570
Bomber Squadrons	
Number of Bombing Raids	265
Number of aircraft engaged in operations	1,304

ESCAPED FROM BENGHAZI, these three British soldiers—from left to right, Trooper Oldham, Ldg. Bombardier Hasler, and Gunner Cocker—marched across the Libyan desert for seven days before encountering a British patrol. Their story is told above by Bombardier Hasler. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

I WAS THERE!

Many American-made bombs have been dropped on Germany during raids such as that described below. An American journalist is shown one at an R.A.F. station. *Photo, L.N.A.*

vanish and I hear distant explosions . . . one, two, three—all of them have detonated.

But now comes the real hell. We are caught in innumerable searchlight beams, the fire of hundreds of guns is concentrated on us. The glare of the bursting shells is so strong that I am able to see the second hand of my watch moving forward. The noise of the explosions is so deafening that it makes me think that it actually burst inside the cabin. You feel you smell the burning wood and fumes. The second pilot helps me to get into the navigating cabin and to fasten the parachute. The whole craft is being thrown about. I can hear the crackling of fragments against the wings. It seems that in a short while we shall fall to bits. Under us lies a sea of light and fire. We fly over it for twelve minutes.

After we have come out of the barrage I take the bearing for the shortest course homewards. The air gunners report much damage and we can't rely too much on the engines. I feel the pulse inside my head. The blood trickles from my leg—my right boot is filled with it. As though for spite, the bomb doors are trapped, diminishing the speed. I finish my calculations and give the pilot a homeward course. The rest of the crew slide a parachute under my feet, making some sort of bandage over it. All is in blood—a fragment penetrated my right thigh above the knee. A shortage of oxygen is threatening us and the base is far away.

We leave Bremen aside and avoid the fierce A.A. barrage, climbing high. Through the damaged parts of the craft a cold wind is blowing ; my leg is nearly frozen. The boot, wet from blood, has shrunk and can't be put on. My comrades are rubbing my thumbs. It is already dawning.

We approach our aerodrome, but the hydraulic undercarriage is jammed. The automatic device letting it down does not work. We pump on the emergency pump in order to increase the pressure. After 45 minutes the undercarriage is let down. We ask for permission to land, and to down. Now, after climbing out of our plane, we can observe the result. The right tire is shot through, and there are about 50 holes in the wings and cowling. Even the pulley system of the starboard wing is cut. How we have managed to reach home I don't know.

Our 'Lady Shirley' Sent a U-boat to its Doom

After a spirited action the crew of H.M. Trawler Lady Shirley sank a U-boat and captured the crew. This remarkable achievement is described below by the Lady Shirley's captain, Lieut.-Commander A. H. Callaway, who was awarded the D.S.O.

We were steaming in daylight when we sighted the conning-tower of a U-boat on the surface. We were several miles away. We steamed at full speed towards the submarine and saw it dive.

Immediately we reached the spot we dropped depth charges. A bare two or three minutes afterwards we saw the periscope and knew the U-boat was surfacing. She was 500 yards away. We turned to port ready to attack with gun-fire or ram her. We learned from the crew afterwards that she had been badly damaged and was leaking, with her machinery out of action.

As soon as the conning-tower opened we swept it with machine-gun fire. We could see the officers and men falling before the hail of bullets. We saw a number of men rushing to man the gun on the deck of the submarine, but they never reached it.

Just as we opened fire with our four-inch gun a machine-gun began to fire from the conning-tower of the submarine. Our first two rounds missed, but after that practically every shell hit the submarine, one bursting on the conning-tower and another penetrating the well and exploding inside.

After our first three rounds our seaman gunlayer, L. W. Pizzey, was killed by machine-gun bullets. Immediately Sub-Lieut. French, in charge of the gun, leapt into his place and with the gun crew working heroically in spite of a hail of machine-gun bullets sweeping the entire length of the ship, we kept up such a hot fire that the enemy machine-gun was silenced and none of the Germans could bring their 4·7 gun into action against us.

They ran away from the gun. We could see them running along the deck of the submarine holding their hands above their heads in token of surrender and shouting. We ceased fire, but kept our gun trained on her. She was badly down by the stern, and her crew, wearing lifebelts, began to jump overboard.

When she plunged down stern first we cheered and then set about the business of picking up the survivors. There were 45 of them, 15 more than the total complement of the Lady Shirley. A rating whose legs had been blown off died soon after we got him on board. I asked one of the two German officer survivors, who spoke English, if he would like to conduct the burial service, but as he was wounded he asked me to do so.

ANOTHER TRAWLER EPIC

THERE'S a Naval trawler on escort duty off the East Coast ; three swastikas decorate her funnel, showing that she has shot down three German aircraft . . . A group of aircraft was seen coming from the English coast, at first thought to be British. The Captain sounded the alarm to give his crew some practice. Then the aircraft were recognized as German. The trawler was ready and shot down two of them. **In this little ship, with less than thirty men, three have won decorations, five have been mentioned in despatches, and five more recommended for bravery in rescuing survivors from another ship.**—*Rt. Hon. A. V. Alexander, broadcasting on Trafalgar Day, 1941.*

I said I had no German flag with which to cover the body, and I presumed they would not wish him to be buried under the Union Jack. Politely they agreed, and with our ship's company and the two German officers and five ratings standing together on the deck I conducted the service, the body going over the side not covered with a flag. The Germans were obviously very touched, and thanked me for the way in which the service was carried out.

We rendered first-aid to eight wounded Germans. On leaving the ship the Germans showed no signs of Nazi arrogance. They thanked us all for what we had done for them. They were absolutely astonished that such a small ship as ours could sink a powerful submarine. Our fire, they said, was so rapid and accurate that they could not man their own gun.—*Reuter.*

THE LADY SHIRLEY'S crew listening as the captain, Lt.-Cmdr. A. H. Callaway, R.A.N.V.R., reads congratulations from the Prime Minister. How this 470-ton trawler sank a U-boat and captured the crew is told above, and a photograph of the ship is in page 237. Her captain received the D.S.O., Lt. Boucaut and Sub-Lt. French the D.S.C., and Seaman S. Halcrow the C.G.M. *Photo, British Official*

Editor's Postscript

FOUND a colleague yesterday busy calculating how to salvage enough old books and magazines to keep the paper mills of Britain at full strength with only a few thousand tons of sea-borne pulp—the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump. Some optimist, this! Yet it sounds dead easy. Population of U.K. and N. Ireland (Eire doesn't count—some of it can't even read) is approximately 46,000,000. Take an average of five persons to each household: say nine million homes. Deduct at least one million as bookless and paperless, then get the remaining eight million households to contribute one book per week (any old book) to the paper salvage scheme, and behold eight million books a week, or a good 400,000,000 a year. Assuming that so many exist (which one may doubt) the annual tonnage of salvage would make repulping one of our great national industries. To which the American "Aw, nuts!" might not be inapposite.

WHEN I thought of the many homes I have seen where the only books have been the local telephone and residential directories, with some old school prizes, a dictionary, and (perhaps) an un-thumbed Bible somewhere in the background, I was unable to go any distance with the optimist along this new road of hope which he was eager to explore. Moreover, in this dire "scorched earth" policy which he would apply to Bookland he would have to get rid of the organization that is working night and day to collect old books not for pulping but for distributing to H.M. Forces as reading matter "to educate, to elevate, to entertain." It indicates, however, the desperate measures that one whose perplexing task is to hunt for plain paper for printing purposes, is ready to consider. For, indeed, the situation is desperate and gets desperater and desperater every day, as Alice might put it in an actual Blunderland more fantastic than her Wonderland.

IT is certainly no laughing matter, and I'm almost ashamed to have reacted so lightheartedly to that flight of fancy, for every publisher of books, newspapers, or periodicals is now engaged in a deadly struggle to keep going, even in a restricted and fractional way, for lack of paper. And it is surprising how greatly the reading public could help those who cater for them by combing their houses, especially their lumber rooms, and collecting all old, outworn, forgotten books, and stray back numbers of magazines—being careful not to overdo the combing process by parting with items whose loss might be soon regretted—all sorts of old paper documents (expired insurance policies exist in scores of thousands and are valueless for any purpose other than repulping), old greeting cards, out-of-date directories and annuals, and tradesmen's catalogues and, of course, newspapers old and new . . . in short all forms of "junk" made from paper. The machinery exists for receiving and disposing of this salvage, for which appreciable payment is obtainable where the quantities are considerable, and I hope that none of my readers in a position to respond to this urgent Salvage Drive are holding back. Let me add, also, that it is not merely, or even primarily, to help the publishing trade that I appeal to my readers, but for our munitions factories where vast quantities of coarse paper are required for making cartridge cases, wrapping and packing bombs, grenades, and many other sorts of "tools" (*vide* Mr. Churchill) so urgently needed to "finish the job."

IT's pleasant to hear of instances where profiteering is disdained by those who might have been excused had they dabbled in it just a little. No one needs to be told that country cottages are fetching fancy rents these days where they are free from the Rent Restriction Acts, or that tenants who enjoy the very one-sided provisions of those acts sub-let rooms at rents which enable them to reap a profit and sit rent free. Well, I heard from a friend yesterday about an actor who for some years has had a tiny country hide-out at a weekly rent of 3s. 10d. Times have been pretty bad with him, and instead of using the cottage for week-ends only he and his wife have been constrained for economy's sake to stay most of their time in this very bijou abode. They have often wondered that the landlord has shown no sign of putting up their rent. The other week, however, a letter came from that traditional ogre, and the actor, nervously opening it, said to his wife: "Here it is at last: the fatal missive. I hope old So-and-so is not sticking us for too much." He was quite prepared in the changed conditions to be charged anything over half-a-guinea, as the humble cot would let today for double that, being in a relatively safe area. "I am sorry," he read out to his wife in lugubrious tones, "that owing to increased costs it will be necessary to ask you for a larger rent, and I suggest that in future you pay me 4s. 2d. instead of the exisiting arrangement of 3s. 10d. I shall be glad to know if this meets with your approval." Joyous collapse of actor. So even in the landlord class simple souls may still be found.

LT.-GEN. SIR ALAN CUNNINGHAM, who conducted the East African campaign in such brilliant fashion, commands the Eighth Army in the Western Desert which launched an offensive into Libya on November 18. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

THIS morning while I had my frugal breakfast in my bedroom, read the papers, bathed, shaved and dressed—a total process occupying very nearly one hour—a tractor with a harrow attached stood upon the village green, its engine all the while sending up a cloud of exhaust vapour to pollute the sharp morning air, for its chug, chug never ceased! Its driver had met a pal with a tradesman's motor van and together they gossiped all that time. I am told that the tractor would be consuming paraffin, petrol being needed only to start its engine, and it might have been that its driver was afraid to stop it because of difficulty in restarting. Still, paraffin ranks next to petrol as liquid fuel and calls for strict economy in its use. Perhaps I'm fussy, but I can think of no plausible excuse for this sort of waste.

LUNCHED today with my old friend, M. Henry D. Davray, who, unique among the French journalists of our time, has given the best of his years to promoting by pen and speech the mutual understanding of the French and British peoples. And although he has been at it for more than forty years, he still found something to do in that way last week, when, at a Press conference, he drew Mr. Brendan Bracken's attention to a typical instance of misunderstanding. A photograph of General Weygand on a platform in an Algiers street "taking the salute" was widely circulated recently in the British press, most of the inscriptions asking the reader to note that Weygand, the legionaries, and the public were all giving "a modified form of the Nazi salute." This, Davray assured me, was nonsense: what they were doing was signifying their submission to the new Vichy constitution in the manner observed in France for generations before his foulness the Fuehrer (an unfriendly critic complimented me on that phrase the other day) or the Nazi party came into being. Which shows how easily a gesture can be misunderstood, especially in a photo. The orthodox Nazi salute has its counterpart in England, as every boy or girl at school is well aware.

"BE like Dad, keep Mum," the silliest of all the stupid posters issued by the M.O.I. has for some time, I was glad to think, ceased to disfigure our streets and stations. But I have not been able to escape the banality; it pursues me on matchboxes! So that for fifty times per box it stares at me in block letters—and my dad and mum have long been one with Julius Caesar, and Napoleon! In many instances the class of reader for whom the words were originally phrased would have been served just as well as if it had read: "Be like Mum, keep Dad."

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